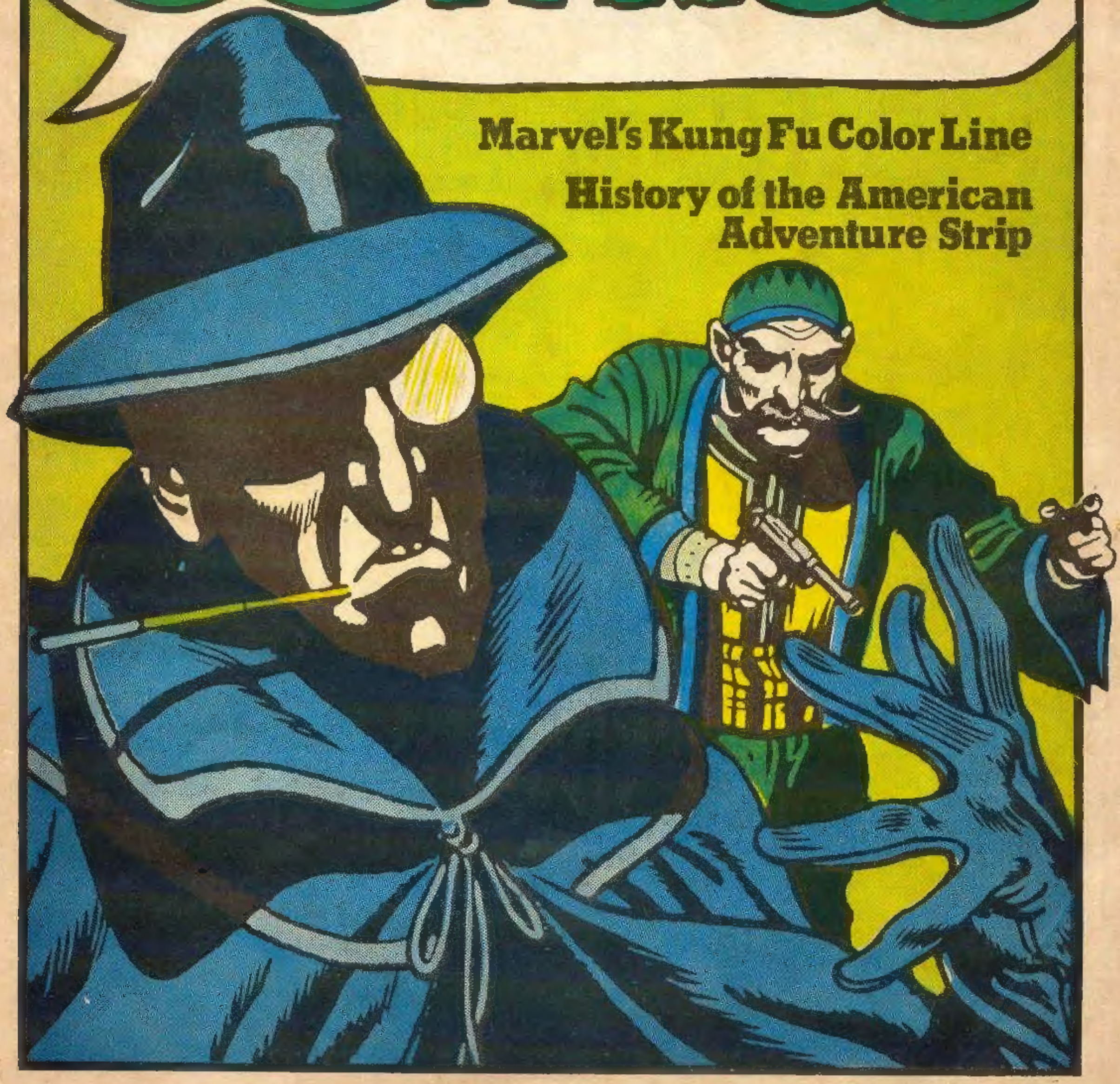
The Dirty Dozen: 12 Pros Gripe About Comics
How To Rate Comic Books by C.C. Beck

INSIDE COMICS

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 3
FALL 1974
$1

Marvel's Kung Fu Color Line

History of the American Adventure Strip



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CONTENTS

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 3
FALL 1974

The Dirty Dozen
by Doug Murray
The comicbook industry has always been plagued by problems. Never has the industry suffered more than it does today. The companies suffer, the distributors suffer, but the largest portion of grief is suffered by the creative talents that make the comicbook industry possible. Twelve of comics' top writers and artists were asked to divulge their gripes about the business of making comicbooks.
Page 10

American Dreaming: An Analysis of the Adventure Strip
by Maurice Horn
The American adventure strips have always been in a constant state of evolution. From their earliest days they have searched for some solid form of identity and pattern to follow. Many of the classic adventure strips copied from each other while others achieved success from mythological themes which they incorporated within the strip. Noted connoisseur of comic art, Maurice Horn takes an indepth look at the origins and themes that form the foundation of the American adventure strip.
Page 14

Repression for the Hell of It: The Doonesbury Scandal!
by John Cochran
Can one comic strip withstand the multiple lynchings being handed out so freely by the newspaper bosses? The sage of Doonesbury reveals the formula for success in an age of fear and repression.
Page 22

The comics Code: 20 Years of Self-Strangulation?
by Ed Summer
The Comics Code has always been a time-bomb slowly ticking away within the heart of the comicbook business. The Code has been the key to success for some while to others it's meant collapse. A host of the biggest and most prominent men in the industry have elected to reflect on the diverse effects the "necessary evil" has had.
Page 24

Departments

Letters
Page 5

The Comic Report
by Ron Barlow
Page 7

The Comic Consumer
edited by Henry Anton
Page 30

George
Page 32

Viewpoints
by William Wu
Does white really make right? According to William Wu, it does.
Page 39

Books
by Joe Kane
The Comic Code's governing book, **AMERICANA IN FOUR COLORS**, is examined in an attempt to understand the antiquated beliefs held by the Code.
Page 41

Viewpoints
by C.C. Beck
Former Captain Marvel artist C.C. Beck provides the ultimate guide to rating your favorite comic book.
Page 42

The Last Word
Page 46

PAGE 11

PAGE 15

PAGE 22

PAGE 24

INSIDE COMICS

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Q. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN:

THE MASTER SATIRIST, WILL EISNER, GETS PAID IN KIND? READ BRIAN BUNIAK'S HUMEROUS, MOODY 5 PAGE "SPIRIT" SATIRE-"THE SPRITE". SUPERBLY DONE. A MUST FOR SPIRIT FANS!

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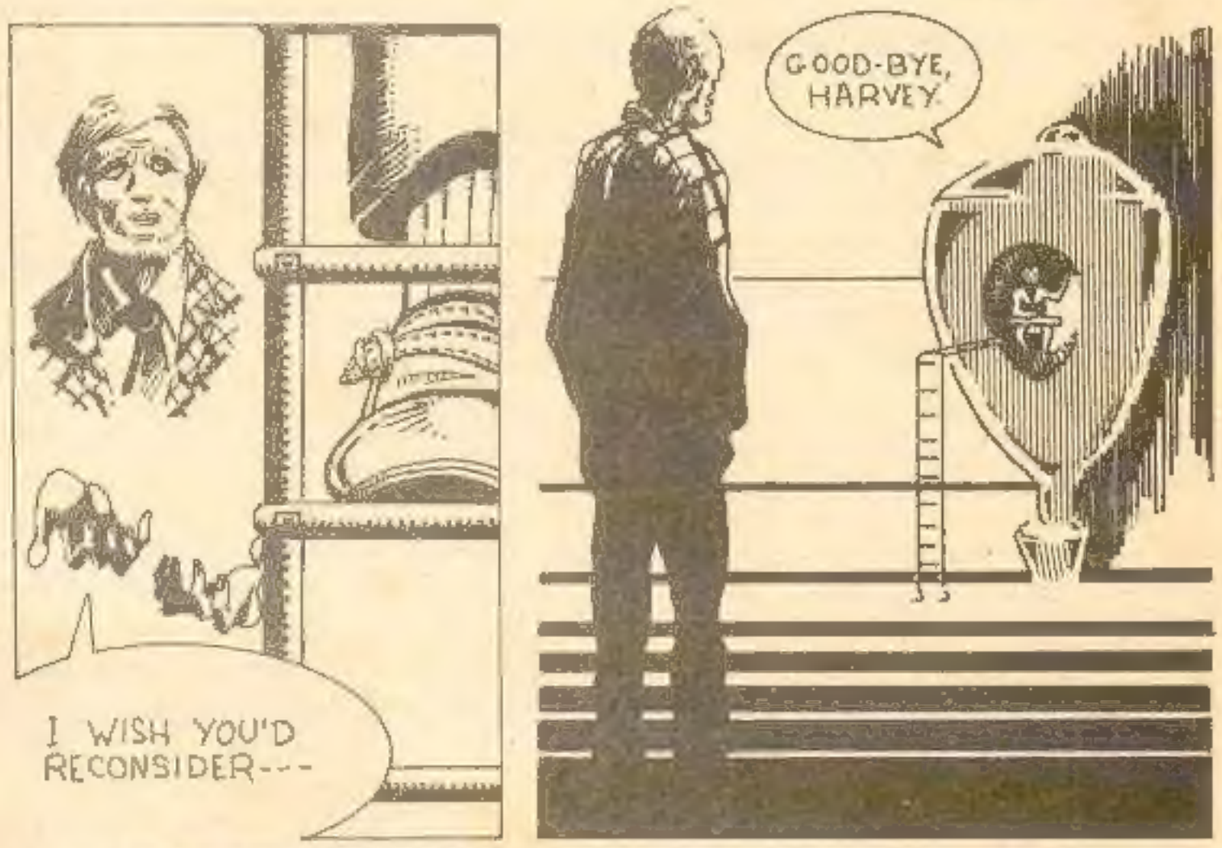
THAT OLD HACK PLOT OF TIME TRAVEL IS USED FOR THE UMTEENTH TIME---AND GIVEN A NEW FRESH, ACTUALLY SURPRISING SURPRISE ENDING? THINK IT CAN'T BE DONE? READ MICHAEL T. GILBERT'S IMAGINATIVE "REPLAY".

Q. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN:

MAN IS DESTROYED IN A GIANT TIDAL WAVE OF PIMPLE-PUS? OR WHEN A MAD CARTOONIST TAKES A RORSCHACH TEST? OR WHEN ANOTHER SIDE OF J. CHRIST IS REVEALED? OR WHEN A ROCK/JAZZ GROUP OF THE FUTURE TAKES TO THE STARS? OR WHEN? OR WHEN? OR WHEN?



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LETTERS

A Doubting Thomas Talks

To the Editor...

A few comments on **INSIDE COMICS** #2.

A pretty good issue, really.

The coverage of the **PANIC/CRAZY** mix-up was fair and mostly accurate, and the situation should dramatize more than ever why the professionals buy so few submitted pieces. We're hardly alone in being fooled by a murkily-motivated plagiarist, of course; Maggie Thompson has told me of a top SF magazine buying a piece which had been previously printed in **Esquire**! All we could do was show our good will by informing Gaines of the error; unfortunately, this letter was left to our legal staff, **not** Marv Wolfman, and I don't really think they contacted Gaines, but rather the other way around. As a result of this mini-fiasco (a.k.a., tempest in a teapot), **CRAZY** will probably accept even fewer outside scripts. Those unhappy with our attitude would do well to hunt up Kenneth Kaasen and do nameless obscene things to him.

High point of the issue for me personally: Steve Ditko's piece, with which Stan Lee and I would agree, at least in large part. Of course, Marvel (and because of it, even Jim Warren) now gives back the original art to the artists and writers, but this is done as an extra bonus, not because we feel artists or writers have an intrinsic right to them. Up till Steve Ditko, I've very seldom read or heard a calmly reasoned defense by an **artist** of the viewpoint that the comic-book company (whatever its faults) made any kind of contribution at all. It's nice to be reminded that it's not elves and fairies who pay those five-figure bills for printing, engraving, etc.– and who pay them whether the issue makes a profit or **not**. Perhaps Ditko's article should be shown to other, less-reasoning advocates of Artistic Primacy such as Gray Morrow **et al.** It seems there **are** two sides to most arguments-- even this one.

Low point of the issue: Seeing C.C. Beck, one of my Golden-Age favorites, playing the embittered old man once more. Despite the inadequacy of the scripts he was given to draw for **SHAZAM!**– despite any mistaken business or editorial decisions-- the fact remains (in my mind, anyhow) that he has real tunnel-vision, if he thinks that comic-book creation is in the hands of "assistant underlings" whose sole **raison d'etre** is to sabotage the brilliant creations of "real creators." Sure, Beck is a great talent (little as I've liked his recent work), and maybe he got a raw deal-- but must he vent his venom so ineptly on the printed page? Any comics company run as stupidly as he implies in his satire/parody would long since be out of business.

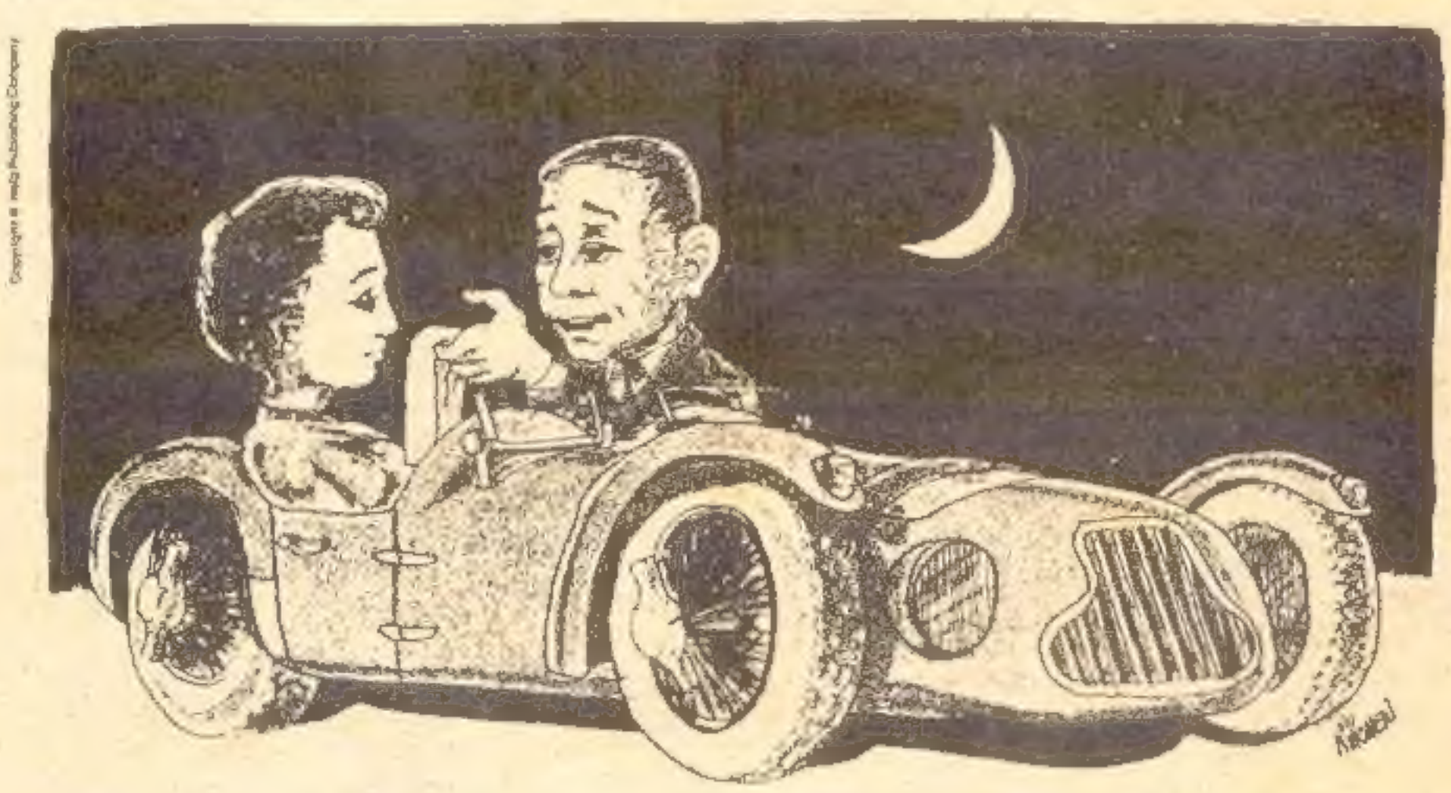
Still, because this is the post-Watergate era of anti-Establishmentism and because everybody knows that no pro comics are worth reading anyway (which is why only a few hundred million of them are sold each year even in the Age of Television), I suppose there'll be those intrepid souls who'll insist on thinking that he's "telling it like it is," just as poor deluded James Ireland (in your letters page) hallucinates himself into believing that pros like myself are "scared shit" of Joe Brancatelli, Ron Barlow, **et al.**, when all we **really** oppose is specific instances of scandal- or rumor-mongering and errors of fact and judgment.

Last point: In addition to having fully as many typos as a Marvel magazine (and far less excuse, since you put out so few magazines, relatively speaking), **must** you persist in using the non-word "adaption"? It's "adaptation," fellas-- or have you been reading too many fanzines?

At any rate, it was nice to pick up an issue not so riddled with errors as the ACBA article of last issue or Joe B's "top ten." Maybe, under editor Barlow's hand– we're skeptical as becomes doubting Thomases from Missouri, but willing to be shown—**INSIDE COMICS** will realize a greater percentage of its potential for **real** good, and get away from its earlier inane posturing ("Everytime you buy a comic-book you're being ripped off"). I hope so.

Roy Thomas
Editor-in-Chief Marvel Comics Group
New York City
May 24, 1974

The post-Watergate era ISN'T anti-establishment, Roy, it's anti-dishonesty. People are tired of hearing lies and being cheated. Everyone has the right to know the truth. The same standard holds true for Inside Comics. We're not anti-Marvel or anti-National. We're only interested in reaching the truth. We must all work together at digging up the lies and half-truths before we can permanently be rid of them.



"AS LONG AS YOU'RE OVER THERE, WHY DON'T YOU POLISH THE CHROME?"

Huh?

To the editor...

I enjoyed "Conversations with the Brother-in-Law of Underground Comix" in **INSIDE COMICS** No. 2. I was intrigued by Wasserman's remark that I "popped up in **HELP!**'s 'Public Gallery'" (page 16). I was further intrigued by Kurtzman's own remark that I was a **HELP** contributor (page 22). I always knew I was **buying** those magazines as a kid... but now I discover I was actually a **contributor** as well. I will be anxiously awaiting **INSIDE COMICS** No. 3 for further disclosures of my past career.

Denis Kitchen
Princeton, Wis.
June 10, 1974

Well, Denis, what can we say? Is it possible that THE Harvey Kurtzman made a mistake? We think not. Good Lord. Obviously you've lost your senses. In an attempt to help you out of your amnesia we've reproduced one of the contributions in question. You've been in this industry long enough to know that some people never make mistakes. Certainly not Harvey Kurtzman and definitely not INSIDE COMICS. (Denis is the publisher of underground comics which appear under the banner of KITCHEN SINK ENTERPRISES.)

The Comic Condition: Slick and Sick?

To the editor...

I am moved to respond to your 3 cover stories.

C.C. Beck's "How to..." sounds only too true... The guys with the money—publishers and clients, always seem to gum up the works and give us consum-

ers, us, the audience, a pile of old double bubble.

I have done some comic strips. Some for free, where I had complete artistic license, and some for money, where I often had to draw around dopey writing.

Many years ago, as a naive, shy, fledgling artist (15 yrs. old), I inspired to work for the wonderful 10¢ comic book **MAD.** I sent the editors samples and asked for an opinion. They sent them back with a friendly "GREAT STUFF"—the MAD EDITORS (in definitive Harvey Kurtzman colored pencil lettering).

Later, after finishing high school, 4 years of college, 3 years of Army and another 3 years at the Art Center College of Design, I finally came to New York City ... but to become an art director. Never forgetting, of course, my strange fondness for those wonderful early MADs and other ECs that even now are vouchsafed in my crazy closet.

The art direction career became a disaster as I noticed, day after day, the opinions of really stupid people carrying unwarranted credance. Cheap, glib, crappy ideas were almost always accepted by clients, while something witty, actually funny, anything at all interesting or new was rejected with a curt. "Well, it doesn't turn me on" by someone who hasn't turned on since his mother sent his comic book collection to the WWII paper drives.

You get the idea. I left the confines of my art director's office to work at home, freelancing as an illustrator and designer.

I know and love comics, but as an artist I would never work for, let's see, who do we have left, uh, Marvel or DC. Reasons?

(1) They don't pay enough.

(2) They keep your artwork. Other magazines like the **NATIONAL LAMPOON, CRAWDADDY, COSMOPOLITAN,** etc. give back your originals with a smile.

(3) It looks as though the art is too carefully controlled. Most of it looks like something between 1963 **VOGUE** magazine and STEVE REEVES School of Muscles.

Today's comics are washed out. They're one corporate point of view. Sameness. Conformity.

The outrageousness of a Basil Wolverton, a Will Elder, a great talent like C.C. Beck or Joe Shuster can't happen now in comics. There are no one page funny pages like the kind where Wolverton blossomed with "CULTURE CORNER" (actually 1/2 page) or where Harvey Kurtzman regaled us with "HEY LOOK" ... these comic relief fillers were sandwiched between more serious stuff, and I think, allowed these artists to grow as artists and WRITERS! Now it's mostly serious stuff. Too serious, I think. And too slick.

So we moon over "The Golden Age of Comics," we croon about the golden age of advertising, we sigh over a 1941 Chevrolet, and we wonder if things will improve.

We have R. Crumb and Victor Moscoso and the rest of the underground tribe. But they, more than anything else, make me resent the fact that the 4-color **PLASTIC MANs** and **BLACKHAWKs** and **SPY-SMASHERs** and **MADs** aren't being created today.

We can blame TV. Partly. Mostly. But I think the comic book publishers must shoulder much of the blame. They are obviously stifling creativity with their low pay, their gluttony over original art and the rest of it.

I would love to do comic strips for the big companies, but I can spend less time doing a Listerine ad for a grand, and spend my spare time fondling my ECs and other old comics, at the same praying that Harvey Kurtzman will start a new comic book.

Until then, POTZREBIE, inside my head, over and over again.

Frank Mell
Brooklyn, N.Y.
June 6, 1974

P.S. Steve Ditko, what have you created? Shucks, are you only an interpreter? The writer should have his typewritten stories, the publisher should have his magazine, the editor should have his corrections done on tracing paper. And you should have nothing. You're stupid.

It would be interesting to some day survey the country and find out just how many artists like yourself have steered clear of the comics industry because of low rates, censorship, and overall conditions. More important, however, would be a survey of the people IN the industry today. Obviously there MUST be some reason they work so hard for so little. MAYBE they enjoy what they're doing. Think about it, Frank. MAYBE they still experience the same emotion and joy you felt as a fledgling 15 year old. Even with all the hardships and crap that goes on in the industry there might be some reward for them. Perhaps the same intangible reward you're missing. Then again they might be stuck with their job with nowhere else to go; with no desire or motivation left in them, which would be a pity. I do feel the comics of today lack the luster of creativity that a Kurtzman could give, but the likes of a Kurtzman come along only once in a blue moon. Unfortunately.

By the way, the comic companies ARE returning artwork and Steve Ditko isn't stupid. He may be guilty of being one of the more clear minded and rational thinking men in the comics industry, but not, as you so callously state, stupid.

Corrections

In issue number 2 of **INSIDE COMICS** the following typographical errors were commited. In the Harvey Kurtzman interview the name **LITTLE ANNIE FANNIE**, which somehow ran that way throughout the interview, should have been **LITTLE ANNIE FANNY.**

In the **COMIC REPORT** under **News Briefs** we made the statement that **Nostalgia Press** has been running at a deficit for the last few years. That statement, according to Woody Gelman, is not true. In fact, **Nostalgia Press** has shown a profit over the last several years.

The Panic At Crazy Continued

[Editor's Note]—Last issue saw the coverage of the foul-up at Marvel with their **PANIC** rip-off which appeared in **CRAZY.** Coverage which naturally brought grumbles to the mouths of Marvel personnel. Oddly enough, however, **no one** at Marvel made any attempt to contact us. If there was something to grumble about, why not direct it at the source? In order to put an end to their mumbling and complaining **INSIDE COMICS** took it upon **ourselves** to request Marvel's statement of fact. After calling Marv Wolfman, who edits **Dracula Lives, Vampire Tales,** and **CRAZY,** and putting in a plea to get Marvel's side of the story, we **finally** received a letter outlining what Marvel considers to be a true account of the **PANIC problem.**

To the editor...

You asked me to clarify what happened concerning the story that appeared in **CRAZY #4** ("Classified Ads") that had previously appeared in **PANIC #6.** To the best of my recollection, here's what happened:

After **CRAZY #4** had hit the stands, I received a call from Tony Isabella who, in turn, had just spoken with West-coast Gold Key writer Mark Evanier who told Tony that "Classified Ads" had originally appeared in **PANIC #6.**

When I heard that I screamed and immediately checked my E.C. Collection to see if I had that issue of **PANIC.** You see, I was never a Panic fan--the stuff, for the most part, didn't interest me or even come close to **MAD,** and so I didn't think I had that issue, but I did find it and checked it out and screamed again. Yes, there it was ... almost identical.

The next day I brought in my copy of Panic, xeroxed the page, xeroxed the **CRAZY** page, xeroxed a copy of the check receipt that writer (?) Kenneth Kaasen had cashed and gave it in to Sol Brodsky who forwarded it to whomever.

Yes, there is a Kenneth Kaasen--he lives in Vancouver, and if I ever see him, there will probably no longer be a Kenneth Kaasen. When I bought his article I had no reason to feel he had taken it from any sources as I never read that issue of **PANIC.**

Last issue of **INSIDE COMICS** was wrong in saying that I wrote a long letter of apology to Bill Gaines. I had not—I just gave the information to Sol. I have not followed anything that has happened since as I don't enjoy getting into the business end of the company and prefer my little role as Editor where I can solely concern myself with the magazine.

Marv Wolfman
New York, N.Y.
June 11, 1974

INSIDE COMICS accepts letters on anything related to the comic art field. Address all mail to: INSIDE COMICS Letters, 11 West 17th Street, New York, New York 10011.

THE COMIC REPORT

SEABOARD SETS SAIL

A number of curious events have taken place within the past few months. First was the abrupt departure of both Martin and Chip Goodman from **MARVEL COMICS**. This in itself was quite a shock since the Goodmans had been the right arm of **MARVEL**'s administrative branch. Then, curiously, an ad appeared in **THE NEW YORK TIMES** requesting persons willing and able to fill a position as a comicbook editor please apply to Seaboard Periodicals. The job boasted a $20,000 a year salary.

After sifting through the mountain of rumors that began flowing, we finally arrived at the facts. The Goodmans had left **MARVEL COMICS** to start a new comic company called **SEABOARD PERIODICALS**. They had advertised in **THE TIMES** for an editor and had found one. Jeff Rovin, of **WARREN**, had gotten the job and agreed to leave **WARREN** and start with them on June 24, 1974. With the excitement of a new comic company in the air, we contacted Jeff Rovin for further details. According to Jeff, **SEABOARD** is working on 8 titles at the moment. The 8 titles will be bi-monthlies with 4 of the 8 books scheduled for release this September. **SEABOARD** plans to have at least 4 of the first 8 books devoted to the standard super-hero clan, but as Jeff puts it, "...they will be totally different in both concept and execution." So far, all seemed well and good since Jeff himself felt that **SEABOARD** would at last inject the comic industry with a freshness of approach that hasn't been seen since **MARVEL** began their super-hero line in 1961. **SEABOARD** will adhere to the Comics Code, but Jeff was quick to say, "Things will be a little touchy with the Code at first because we're going to try a few new things." He wouldn't elaborate on just what those new things were nor would he give us any details as to the names of the books or characters. He said he really wasn't at liberty to discuss anymore since copyright clearance wasn't finalized yet on much of **SEABOARD**'s ideas. Rovin did say that **SEABOARD** was planning

to offer extra benefits to all artists employed by them. **SEABOARD** plans to not only return all original artwork to the artists, but suggested a definite desire to arrange reprint royalties for the artists as well. **NATIONAL** has been promising for over a year to pay their artists for reprinted material, but has done nothing. **ARCHIE**, on the other hand, has been paying their artists $6 a page for all reprinted work. **SEABOARD** seems to be off on the right foot and, if their plans succeed, we may be in store for a real treat. **SEABOARD** has offered both Howie Chaykin and Walt Simonson a book a piece at this writing. We called Chip Goodman at **SEABOARD** for further comments, but he declined to even speak with us. His secretary told us that he wouldn't be free to discuss anything for at least another two weeks. In the event you'd care to contact **SEABOARD** write to: **SEABOARD PERIODICALS**, 717 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022. □

WRETCHED EXCESS
Mitchell Mehdy, eighteen-year-old "King of the Comics," bought a copy of the first Superman comic book for $1,801.26.

MORE WRETCHED EXCESS

Mitchell Mehdy, "King of Comic Inflation," has struck again. This time Mitchell rose to new heights as guest on the nationally syndicated TV show TOMORROW. Naturally the show labored on such trite and monotonous questions as, "Gee are comicbooks really worth so much?" and of course Mehdy took every opportunity to expound his special "Mehdy Price Guide" to comic values in which comicbooks run as high as $5000.00. Interestingly enough Mehdy owns the 5 grand comic (some odd-ball Mickey Mouse edition) which he claims no one else in the whole wide world owns. Fortunately Mehdy was interrupted frequently and the conversation drifted around until Mehdy came out with a sentence which will always stick in my mind, "...comics are good because they appeal to people of all walks of ages." A classic quote which brought laughter to an otherwise dull evening. Thank you Mitchell Mehdy for your wisdom □

THE COMIC ART GALLERY COMES OF AGE

Suddenly New York City has two hopeful Comic Art Galleries in the works. Ed Summer is currently enlarging his Supersnipe Comic Shop at 1617 Second Avenue to accommodate a large selection of original comic art. The actual date that the expanded gallery will open is not known yet, but Ed assures us it's in the near future. For further details write to: The Comic Book Art Gallery and Euphorium, 1617 Second Avenue, New York City 10028.

Another comic art gallery is also in the works at 23 East 67th Street. This one, aptly titled The Puck Gallery, is being manned by Harry Metetsky and is scheduled to open to the public sometime in July. Metetsky plans to exhibit as large a selection of comic art he can lay his hands on. □

FLIM, FLAM, FOOM

It's reported that **MARVEL**'s Fan Club **FOOM** has two people

working full-time on typing labels, packing orders and such. In addition two other part-time people help out in a desperate attempt to clear up Marvel's backlog of orders. Can they ever catch up? Well, according to one Marvel spokesman, the latest issue of **FOOM** went out within 24 hours of its arrival. Not surprisingly, the entire mailing was returned from the Post Office with a request to change the zip-code order. Do their problems never cease? □

BORED WITH FORD

As reported in **THE NEW YORK TIMES**, the nation's top editorial cartoonists are sick of Vice President Gerald Ford. Not in the usual sense, however, for their problems stem from the fact that, as syndicated cartoonist Bill Crawford puts it, "He's kind of blah looking, you know, not an obvious characteristic in sight. He hasn't got Nixon's nose or Humphrey's head." Tom Flannery of the **BALTIMORE SUN** has similar feelings, "He's kind of bland ... the less drawing you do, the closer you get to him."

The cartoonists got their first close hand look at Vice President Ford when he recently addressed the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists in Boston. Aware of the problem the cartoonists had been having, Ford began by saying, "When I was introduced just now I was wondering if you were imagining a cartoon depicting a number of identical Jerry Fords seated behind desks with a caption: 'Will the real Jerry Ford stand up?'"

Many of the cartoonists still have a real problem portraying the Vice President, but Jerry Robinson, cartoonist for the Chicago Tribune and New York Daily News syndicate, feels he has the problem licked: "He's a battered football helmet, a little used, friendly, kicked around a lot but it endures." Likewise Ed Gamble of the **NASHVILLE BANNER** finds Ford easy to draw. "He's got a good face, a square chin, a balding top of head, and a muscular body. I'm not having any trouble at all."

Vice President Ford still finds it interesting when people like Rob Lawlor of the **PHILADELPHIA DAILY NEWS** say, "He's got a very ordinary face." It's especially interesting to Ford since he's a collector of editorial cartoons. He's managed to collect quite a few editorials with himself pictured, but, unfortunately, many of his favorite cartoonists still can't capture his blahness. □

Tom Flannery "Kind of bland"

Jerry Robinson
"He's a battered football helmet"

Rob Lawlor
"He's got a very ordinary face"

MONSTER TIMES BOOKSHELF

MORROW

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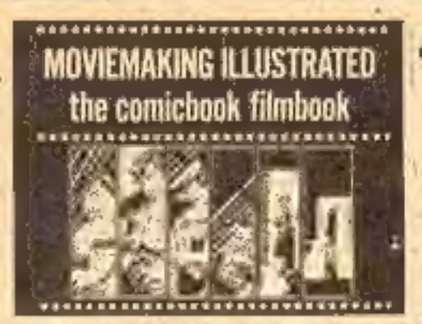

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ALTER EGO ... Roy Thomas' fanzine. Need we say more? Interview with Gil Kane and articles on the New York Con, Jim Steranko, Joe Kubert and Tor and the Comics Code. Parodies by Thomas and Wood. **Only $1.50 plus 25c.**

JEFF JONES

JEFF JONES' SPASM ... Erratically distributed underground comic written and illustrated by Jeff Jones. Science fiction oriented with fantastic artwork and color covers. Over 21 only, please. **Only 75c plus 25c.**

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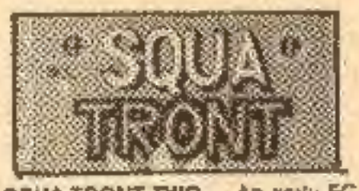

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AT LAST! After 20 years of hoping and praying, EC is back in full color, just as they appeared all those years ago. The best comics in the world are back again!!! At only a buck each.

EC REPRINT #2 is actually **WEIRD SCIENCE #15** and it includes four more EC classics in full color as they originally appeared. The stories are: "Miscalculation" by Jack Kamen, "Bum Steer" by Joe Orlando, "The Martians" by Wally Wood and "Captivity" by Al Williamson. **$1.00 plus 25c.**

EC REPRINT #3 is actually **SHOCK SUSPENSE STORIES #12** and contains the following four stories: "The Monkey" by Joe Orlando, "Fall Guy" by Wally Wood, "Deadline" by Jack Kamen and "The Kidnapper" by Reed Crandall. **$1.00 plus 25c.**

EC REPRINT #4 is actually **HAUNT OF FEAR #12** and contains "What's Cookin'," by Jack Davis, "Till Death Do We Part" by Joe Orlando, "On A Dead Man's Chest" by Johnny Craig, and "Poetic Justice" by Graham Ingels. **$1.00 plus 25c.**

EC REPRINT #5 is actually **WEIRD FANTASY #13** and contains the following stories: "Home to Stay," by Wally Wood; "The Trip," by Jack Kamen; "The End," by Wally Wood; and "Don't Count Your Chickens," by Joe Orlando. **$1.00 plus 25¢.**

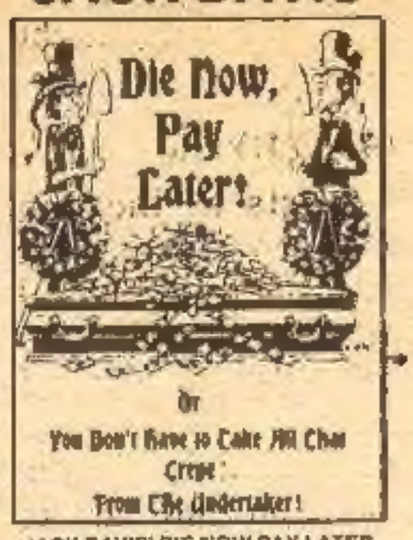
EC REPRINT #6 is actually **CRIME SUSPENSTORIES #25** and contains "Three For The Money" by Jack Kamen, "Dog Food" by Reed Crandall; "Key Chain" by Bernie Krigstein; and "The Squealer" by George Evans. **$1.00 plus 25c.**

E.C. REPRINT #7 is actually **THE VAULT OF HORROR #26** and contains "Two of a Kind" by Craig, "Graft in Concrete" by David, "Half-Way Horrible" by Sid Check, and "Hook, Line and Sinker" by Ingels. **$1 plus 25¢**

E.C. REPRINT #8 is actually **SHOCK SUSPENSTORIES #6** and contains "Dead Right" by Kamen, "Undercover" by Wood; "Not So Tough" by Orlando; and "Sugar and Spice" by Ingels. **$1 plus 25¢.**

GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE ... One of the best magazines ever produced in fandom. This issue contains an interview and artwork by Gahan Wilson and an interview with Harry Harrison. Color covers by Wilson and Harrison and Wally Wood. **Only $1.00 plus 25c.**

JACK DAVIS



JACK DAVIS' DIE NOW PAY LATER Jack Davis illustrated this novelty book back in 1964 for Herber Card Company. It's almost impossible to find today. Written by humorist Harold Meyers. Limited supply. **Only $1.50 plus 50c.**

WOLVERTON

BASIL WOLVERTON'S BJORKZ-LXCSWO ... Only Basil Wolverton would name a comic book like that. 32 page tiny comic book with all new Wolverton material. Funny material as always. Wild Wolverton strikes again. **Only 75c plus 25c.**

PORTFOLIOS

REALITY ... A fine fanzine with covers by Larry Todd and Mike Kaluta in full color. Interior work by Kaluta, Wrightson, Brunner, Bruce Jones, Ken Smith, Howie Chaykin and Bill Stillwell. **Only $3.00 plus 25c.**

PHASE ONE ... Fine art books with 84 pages of stellar work by Brunner, Colon, Denny O'Neil, Berni Wrightson, Gerry Conway, Gray Morrow, Marv Wolfman, Rich Buckler, Jeff Jones, Ken Barr, Mike Kaluta, Ken Smith, Tom Sutton, Tony DeZuniga, Neal Adams and others. Color covers. **Only $3.00 plus 25c.**

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SENSUOUS FRAZETTA ... All about the Frazetta you didn't know about. The 28 page magazine contains illustrations Frazetta did for sex novels in the early 1960's. All are beautiful drawings of beautiful women. **Only $2.50 plus 25c.**

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FRAZETTA FOLIO ... A slim book with 24 pages of classic Frazetta. Monsters, girls, animals, girls, self portraits, girls, a Thunda strip and even some girls (and women!) **Only $3.00 plus 25c.**

NEAL ADAMS

THE NEAL ADAMS INDEX ... Just about everything and anything Neal Adams has ever done for comics, advertising agencies and movies. Never before published material and an interview. All for only **$2.00 plus 25c.**

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LAMPOON VS. HARPOON

The **NATIONAL LAMPOON** doesn't rest well lately. It's losing sleep over a new project being worked on by Bill Skursky, formerly of Cloud Studios in New York. The new project is a magazine which will lampoon **LAMPOON** and is aptly titled **HARPOON**. Details as to the actual contents for the first issue are heavily guarded, but it's reported that **NATIONAL LAMPOON** is already filing suit against Lopez Publishing Company, the publishers of the forthcoming **HARPOON**. Skursky was unavailable for comment, but his previous credits include editorship of **DROOL COMICS**. □

OCTOBRIANA IN ACTION

The already legendary Russian underground comic character, Octobriana, is flashing headlines

in England and the United States simultaneously. The character Octobriana was created by an underground student group in the Soviet Union to attack Stalinism. The strips were then smuggled out from behind the Iron Curtain by Czech defector Peter Sadecky and were published in the book, **OCTOBRIANA AND THE RUSSIAN UNDERGROUND**. The book is already in big demand in both England and the U.S. and singer David Bowie liked the concept so much that he decided to produce a film about her. Bowie selected 29 year old actress Amanda Lear to play Octobriana, and plans to start filming as soon as Amanda finishes mastering the martial arts. Meanwhile an American TV studio has also decided to work up a series around the defiant, bare-breasted wonder woman from the Iron Curtain. We suppose it won't be long before we begin seeing Octobriana door mats, toys, games, and shower curtains. □

MARVEL TRIVIA

It seems very likely that **MARVEL** will have at least 100 different titles out by the end of this year. It gets to be increasingly more difficult to keep up with their output. Even the personnel at **MARVEL** have trouble keeping track of their titles.

MARVEL's assistant editor, Tony Isabella, who handles script submissions, has been pulling his hair out as of late. He regrets the fact that **MARVEL** isn't receiving enough worthwhile scripts for the black and white titles. So, if any of you talented script-writers haven't turned to **MARVEL** yet, maybe this is your opportunity.

MARVEL has begun a type of Psychological Warfare in their attitude toward **NATIONAL**. As their biggest competitor, **NATIONAL** has always been in the minds of **MARVEL** staff, but currently the **MARVEL** staff has convinced themselves that it's only a matter of time before **NATIONAL** goes out of business. They feel confident that **NATIONAL** is playing the comicbook business all wrong. Could **MARVEL** have brainwashed themselves into believing something that has only the remotest chance of ever

coming true? Rather than deal in abstractions we asked **NATIONAL** for a brief statement on their financial picture for this year. Carmine Infantino and Bill Gaines (who works for **NATIONAL** in an executive capacity) were quoted as saying, "In the first three months of 1974, **NATIONAL** alone made more money than the whole of Cadence Industries." Cadence Industries is a huge conglomerate which owns, among many other things, **MARVEL COMICS**. Why would **MARVEL** labor under such delusions? Are they delusions? **NATIONAL** is making a lot of money, but maybe **MARVEL** does know something. Or perhaps **MARVEL** would like to spread a rumor like this just to attract some of the **NATIONAL** staff over to their side of the fence. Whatever the reasons **MARVEL** has, only time will tell. □

PLAYBOY MAKES IT WITH MARVEL

Forthcoming from **PLAYBOY** magazine will be an article about **MARVEL'S 1975 SUPER-HERO CALENDAR**. Some of Marvel's big guns were assigned the work on this latest escapade including John Romita, Marie Severin, Mike Ploog, Barry Smith on art with scripting (scripting?) by none other than Roy Thomas. Coloring credits go to George Roussos. The most interesting thing about the **PLAYBOY** plug is the fact that **MARVEL** plans to double their print run to cover the flood of orders they fantasize about. Tentative price tag for this bonanza is $3.95. □

JUNIOR BULLPEN BLUES

As of late **D.C.** has been having trouble finding work for their "Junior Bullpen." So, to fill the void, **D.C.** has decided to put the kids to work on a **D.C.** funded fanzine. Sol Harrison will be the editor and the "Junior Bullpen" will co-edit and contribute to **D.C.**'s latest bid at fan appeal. It's reported that it will be a slick, professional (of course) fanzine with the tentative title, "The Amazing World of D.C. Comics." It's also reported that Sol Harrison won't give any more upcoming news to David Finger of the Comic Reader as he fears the competition. (Competition?) □

MARTIN ON THE MARCH

MAD artist, Don Martin, seems to be popping up with samples of

his insanity everywhere. Latest of these is a cute piece done for Display Die Cutting. It's just a simple trade advertisement, but the Martin touch creates a collector's item. If you'd like one write to: Display Die Cutting, 400 Lafayette Street, N.Y. 10003. □

BRINGING UP FATHER'S DAY

In an attempt to promote Father's Day, Mays Department Store on 14th Street in New York City elected to dress up their windows with a series of cardboard cutouts of Maggie and Jiggs from "Bringing Up Father."

Neatly arranged within 5 separate windows were 5 individual scenes with accompanying word balloons a la comic strip fashion. A beautiful idea well executed. □

INFLATION HITS AT E.C.

The price of the E.C. reprint books, published by East Coast Comix, will be going to $1.25. The publishers have been absorbing the sky-rocketing paper increases, but they've reached their limit. Starting with their 10th reprint, **HAUNT OF FEAR #23**, the cover price will go to $1.25. Also at that time all back issues will likewise be raised to $1.25. □

MARVEL STAMPS STICK

For those of you who have been eagerly collecting the **MARVEL Super-Hero Stamps** which appear regularly in their books, you'll be happy to hear that a second stamp book, in which to paste your stamps down, is planned. Apparently there are quite a few kiddies out there who get joy out of cutting up their Marvel comics and gluing stamps into stamp books. The 100th stamp is Galactus, the most powerful foe, and it appears in Sub-Mariner #72, the last issue of that magazine. □

ACBA AWARDS

On June 25, 1974 **ACBA** (The Academy of Comic Book Arts) held its Fourth Annual Awards Banquet. The presentation of their **SHAZAM** awards was based on the previous balloting among **ACBA** members. The winners of this years **SHAZAM** awards were as follows:

GENERAL DIVISION

BEST LETTERER:
Gaspar Saladino
BEST COLORIST: Glynis Wein
BEST CONTINUING FEATURE:
SWAMP THING
Script: Len Wein,
Art: Berni Wrightson
BEST INDIVIDUAL STORY:
(Over 10 pages):
"Song of Red Sonia" **CONAN #24**
Script: Roy Thomas
Art: Barry Smith
BEST INDIVIDUAL SHORT STORY
(Under 10 pages):
"Himalayan Incident"
DETECTIVE #437
Script: Archie Goodwin
Art: Walt Simonson
BEST HUMOR STORY:
"The Gourmet"
PLOP #1
Script: Steve Skeates,
Art: Berni Wrightson
OUTSTANDING NEW TALENT:
(A tie)
Walt Simonson,
Jim Starlin
BEST FOREIGN COMIC SERIES:
"LT. BLUEBERRY"
(Charlier and Giraud)
SUPERIOR ACHIEVEMENT
BY AN INDIVIDUAL:
Richard Corben—writer/artist
HALL OF FAME:
Carl Barks

HUMOROUS DIVISION

BEST PENCILER: Marie Severin
BEST INKER: Ralph Reese
BEST WRITER: (A tie)
Stu Schwartzberg, Steve Skeates

DRAMATIC DIVISION

BEST PENCILER:
Berni Wrightson
BEST INKER: Dick Giordano
BEST WRITER: Archie Goodwin

"The time will come when the companies will have ...
no new talents to turn to. That will be the end of the comics."

The Dirty Dozen

by Doug Murray

In no other country in the world do we find more people willing and able to gripe as in the good old U.S.A. Maybe it's because Americans have the freedom to complain and as such we seem to take every chance to do so. We've all been victimized by one evil or another of the "Great Society" and it comes as no terrific surprise to anyone to gripe about it. Politics, Inflation, Pollution, Crime and a host of other Yankee ills monotonously greet our senses everyday.

It seems only natural that the comics field should have its fair share of ailments to complain about. In fact, everyone that works for the comics has something to gripe about. They all have their pet peeves that they air at every opportunity. Most of which are valid and constructive criticisms of the comics industry in its present form, and all of which give valuable insight into the minds of the creators of the industry.

On the following pages we will examine the thoughts of twelve of the more successful members of the comic field. Men who have proved that they have what it takes to succeed and who feel there is definite room for improvement in a problem-ridden industry. They've elected to discuss their gripes openly so that you can share in a bit of their dirt and grime. **Enter ... The Dirty Dozen.**

JIM STERANKO is one of the most influential artists in the comics. His work on "Shield" and "Captain America" inspired a whole new style of comic art, a more graphic, more dynamic style, a style still practiced and perfected by Jim himself. His Mediascene has become one of the most important of the newszines, and his work on FOOM got the whole project off the ground——

"I guess the biggest problem in the field I could think of would be the incredibly avaricious attitude of the publishers and, to a lesser extent, the editors. The publishers are trying to squeeze every cent they can out of the comics, even at the expense of their contributors. None of them, with one or two exceptions, care how their product looks or even how its received, as long as it makes money. They'll screw the creative people at every opportunity. There are exceptions of course. Bill Gaines has always been very good to his people and Dizzy Arnold used to give bonuses of thousands of dollars, but that kind of thing never happens now. Let me give you an example. A couple of years ago, when I was working fairly regularly for Marvel I got a bonus at Christmas from the company **and** a bonus from Marty Goodman, the publisher. Year before last, when I wasn't working much for them but had done some covers, I got a care package ... you know, cheese, some exotic foods, that sort of thing. Last year, I did a lot of work on FOOM and for that I got nothing. Nowadays when the overhead goes up, when the publishers have to pinch some pennies, they don't give a cut to the printers ... they have a union; they don't cut the engravers, or the colorers, they have a union too. They cut the creative people, the artists and writers. As long as this continues, the really capable people, the ones whom the comics really need, are going to continue to be forced out of the industry, simply to make a decent living."

ESTEBAN MAROTO is the most famous, and, perhaps, most successful of the Spanish artists. His work for the Warren magazines brought him instant fame in the U.S. and his subsequent work for Marvel has created a tremendous fan following——

"I feel that my biggest gripe about the American industry would have to concern story-telling policies. In the American comics the story is told through lengthy pieces of prose, either in dialogue or in captions. I feel that since comics are a visual medium, the story should be told visually, in pictures alone. Any dialogue or captions should be secondary, added just for necessary clarification or to add flavor to the story. In Spanish comics, the dialogue is unimportant and very often whole stories are done without the use of a single word balloon. Here it is completely different, there are words everywhere, and this detracts from the art, which is, in my opinion, the most important element in the books."

ROY THOMAS is the editor-in-chief and prime mover at Marvel comics. His deft editorial techniques, sharp feel for public taste, and incisive writing abilities have led Marvel to the forefront of the comics industry——

"I guess my biggest gripe about the industry would concern the problems we have with distribution and sales. In fact, I'm not sure the comic book industry can survive if the present system continues. Right now, comics are such a nickel and dime business in comparison with other printing operations that many distributors don't even bother to get the books to the stands, they feel their profit just isn't high enough for the effort. Because of this there are areas of the country where people **never** see comic books. The situation is such right now that we are actually selling fewer issues than we were in the fifties. We're lucky if 2/3 of the printed copies actually make it to the stands. This means that our profits aren't what they could be, and consequently a large source of fan support and possible future contributors is lost entirely."

GERRY CONWAY is young, multi-talented, and one of the top writer/editors at Marvel. His work for the comics industry has been inspired and exciting from the beginning. His science-fiction has been nothing short of brilliant. The

JIM STERANKO

HOWARD CHAYKIN

DON McGREGOR

ESTEBAN MAROTO

AL WILLIAMSON

MARY WOLFMAN

ROY THOMAS

GRAY MORROW

NEAL ADAMS

GERRY CONWAY

TONY ISABELLA

MIKE NASTA

Illustrations by James Neri

combination of the talents in this one man makes him a formidable figure in the comic industry——

"I think the biggest problem is the lack of self-respect in so-called "comic people." A lack of respect in our own abilities, our own product. Many seem to feel that they have reached the highest level of creative endeavor that they can maintain. They also feel that that level, the comics industry, is very low. As long as that feeling of impotency, of being incapable of doing better exists, those who feel that way will be incapable of better. People who talk about lack of critical acclaim, low salary, that sort of thing, are looking in the wrong direction. Any psychiatrist will tell you that you have to respect yourself before you can get others to respect you. As long as we don't respect our own abilities, our own talents as creators of entertainment, the comic industry will continue to stagnate, to fail to produce the greatness it is capable of."

HOWARD CHAYKIN is another of the young, talented breed of artists that has made an appearance in the last few years. His work on "Sword of Sorcery," "Iron Wolf" and other features has given him the respect deserving of such brilliant talent. Despite his talent he has had two series cancelled from beneath him. A move that has caused his withdrawal to the Warren black and white books——

"My biggest gripe with the comic industry is the lack of freedom. An artist is expected to curb any imagination he may have and work to a blueprint given him by an editor. He has to try to bring life to a character thay may seem dead to his own mind. Comics today are cursed with a deadly sameness, a sameness that is due to the companies' reluctance to let the creative people create. How can an artist get involved with a character when no part of that character is his own? The writer tells you what to draw and you draw it. The result is that every character is essentially the same with a differently colored costume. If they ever invent a computer that can draw what it is told to draw, the comic book artist will be out of business."

AL WILLIAMSON is one of the all time greats of the comics field. His work for EC is some of the best comic book work of all time, his present work, both in the syndicated "Secret Agent Corrigan" and in occasional comic appearances has upheld his reputation for artistic excellence——

"I can't really say I've had any great gripes about the comic business. It's my opinion that a man creates his own gripes. In my case, I've always been careful not to get in a situation where I would have problems that would cause me to gripe. I don't like tight editorial control, I like to kind of, do-my own thing, so I've been careful to work for people that have left me alone. At E.C. there was minimal editorial interference, and I was so young and eager it wouldn't have made any difference anyway. Since then, the security of the strip (Corrigan) has made it possible for me to pick and choose my own jobs. So I have to say, I really don't have major gripes. I guess someone has to say something nice about the industry."

GRAY MORROW is in a strange position. A talented artist and writer for the last decade, Gray has recently become editor of Archie Comics' "Red Circle" line. This added position gives Gray a rare insight into the comics field, an insight many artists can never experience——

"In my opinion, my biggest gripe, the biggest single problem in the industry is that people are not getting paid enough for the product they create. An artist spends his whole life learning to draw, to create life from black lines and pieces of paper. A writer learns to write, polishes his art, and starves until he finally begins to work. Put these people in the comics and they find they have to turn out huge volumes of work in order to make a decent living. Turning out large volumes of work means they cannot give the work their fullest attention ... it means that nothing they do will be the best they are capable of. This leads to a lack of self respect, and eventually one of

INSIDE COMICS

You might say we're the survival guide for comics fandom

If you're an average comic fan, you might buy as many as 150 color comics a month You might also buy as many as a dozen black and white comics every month

And then, when you get into fandom, there are hundreds of fanzines, dozens of conventions, and, oh, those comic dealers.

Sometimes you feel you need your whole week s salary just to keep your head above water Not to mention what you feel like when times get bad

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For those fanzine buyers out there, we've got **GEORGE.** And he's a good man. He rates and reviews all the current fanzines. Tel s you what $20 fanz nes you should be buying and which ones you should be avoiding He'll also find out wh ch of those 25 cent fanzines to snap up ... and which to skip

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"The publishers ... they'll screw the creative people at every opportunity."

two things happen; either disintegration into a hack turning out work on deadline with no spark, no real interest, or drop out of the field and try to find a more rewarding market for their work.

"On the other hand, as long as the profit margin for the publisher remains at its present level, he cannot afford to raise rates without losing profits and making his investment even less worthwhile. It's a vicious cycle, and one that has to be corrected before the comics will be the viable force they should be."

TONY ISABELLA is one of the new breed of comic book people. He came up from the ranks, starting as a comic fan, working for fanzines and newszines, graduating to production with the big companies and finally editorial status. His feelings for the grass roots of the industry give him an important insight into its problems——

"I would have to say the biggest problem I can see, the one that bothers me the most, is a lack of personnel. We just don't have enough people to do the amount of work we must ... and that causes other problems. If we are short artists, each artist ends up doing more work than he should, forcing him to rush his work somewhat, not giving it the care he would otherwise. It forces the writers to carry more characters than they normally would, not allowing them the amount of time and development they need. The problem spreads, production suffers because of the rush and the whole product is somewhat less than it could be. These problems will continue until we can get enough competent people to do the job right."

DON McGREGOR is one of the newer and more dynamic members of the Marvel family. His scripts, tightly plotted with some of the most realistic dialogue in the comics, have injected a healthy dose of adrenalin into some of Marvel's potentially weaker series. His editorial work and article writing prowess have also added a refreshing quality to Marvel's B&W books.——

"I guess deadlines. Deadlines are a problem in any medium, but especially in the comics. There are just **more** of them . if you're planning on eating regularly. There are always those vultures sitting behind your shoulder, waiting ... In comics you finish your script, and there's no feeling of elation, you know there's another waiting, and that production is already scheduling the one after that. It becomes a vicious cycle. You can't blame it on anybody, it's just part of the industry. So, you've just written your ass off and now it's time for something else. I don't know about everybody else, but when I finish a script I'm emotionally drained. I'm just not ready to get into another one, but those vultures are still sitting over my shoulder. I may want time for the character to develop, for background to seep into my head, but it's just not there.

In comics the writer has to work fast, he has to use a kind of shorthand anyway, there's just not enough room to say anything special, you may have a statement to make, possibly something very profound, but there's just not room. It's especially tough because you're working with the same material, the same life-and-death situations month after month. It's really tough to try and resolve the same things in different ways.

Of course there are certain rewards. When you hold that four-color book in your hand you forget all the hassles, all the tenseness, but you still have those new hassles, that new tenseness ... The vultures are still there, and if the words don't come quickly or clearly enough, comic writing can become sheer hell.

MARV WOLFMAN is Roy Thomas' second-in-command. A man who has gone from successful writer to successful editor. A man who has left an imprint on the company he has chosen to work for. An imprint, and an influence that will last for years to come——

"I guess my biggest complaint about the present industry would be deadlines. As a writer myself I've always had more than I can handle with deadlines. Asking a creative person to create on schedule is counter-productive. Nothing short-circuits the thinking process more easily than the ticking of a clock. The situation is even worse with the artists. How you can expect a man to spend x amount of time on x number of pages of work and still have that work be the best, or almost the best, he is capable of is beyond me. As long as the companies feel it necessary for them to have a certain schedule adhered to, it will probably be impossible for the American comic industry to reach the height of perfection it is capable of reaching."

NEAL ADAMS is the president of ACBA, the organization dedicated to making life more livable for members of the comic industry. He is, in addition, perhaps the most talented and popular of comic artists. His work has been honored with every prize comic book art is capable of winning. His position in the industry as a champion of the free-lance is unchallenged——

"I'd have to say that the single biggest gripe about the industry I can think of is the lack of respect we get from outside. No matter what we do in the comic books, the outside world dismisses it as childish crud. The fact that many of the people working in the industry are highly talented and capable of doing work that would be recognized in any other field makes no difference. There just isn't any comment on comic work, outside of a select field. No comment means no meaningful criticism, no criticism means no recognition, no recognition means no money. It seems a shame that a man like Frank Frazetta, who was primarily a comic artist, had to go outside the field, to do something different, in order to gain recognition of his talent. The recognition that allows him to sell posters, originals, that sort of thing, and make the kind of money he now makes. If the comic book industry got the recognition it deserved, it would mean that those deserving of recognition would get it. This would mean that they would get more money, and the money would allow them to concentrate more on their work and produce even better work. It would solve the problem of hacking, and would allow those who want to do superior work, do superior work without being financially shortchanged. Yes, the thing the industry needs is respect from outside. And the only way we can get that respect is by getting those outside to see our work as valid entertainment, rather than "That silly comic-book stuff."

MIKE KALUTA is one of the most dynamic and talented of the new generation of artists. His work on "Carson of Venus" and "Spawn of Frankenstein" led to his feature assignment on "The Shadow," a book that became an instant best-seller, a book that has since been taken away by the powers-that-be at National

"I think that my biggest gripe would be a lack of respect for the creative people, the writers and artists, that is apparent in the companies. The editors and publishers seem to feel that the people under them are mere machines, machines like the presses that produce the work that eventually goes to the public. They never give a book a fair trial before deciding whether to continue or cancel it. This is especially true when the artist involved is young and "untried." National has proved this time and again with Howie Chaykin, Walt Simonson, and myself. It seems to me that as long as the companies are not willing to give new enterprises and new talents a chance to fully prove themselves, the time will come when the companies have no new enterprises or new talents to turn to. That will be the end of the comics." □

Pictures as communication can be traced back to the dawn of man
Here, a Sumerian King from 4000 B C records the epic battles of his career as narrative art

American Dreaming: An Analysis Of The Adventure Strip

by Maurice Horn

TO LIVE DANGEROUSLY

Adventure and the unknown have always exercised a fascinating appeal upon the imagination and the human spirit. Ever responsive to popular aspirations, the comic-strip was prompt to seize upon this universal dream. If Charles Kahles was the first to mine this rich lode in his strips, he did not remain long the only one. The first decades of the century were a great age of explorers and discoverers, and the travel accounts of these hardy spirits were soon to find their way into the comic pages. Poetically transposed or devastatingly parodied, they gave additional color to the erratic wanderings of Felix the Cat, the mock heroics of Boob McNutt, the round the world odyssey of the Gumps, the cataclysmic cruise of the Katzenjammers.

The early strips however used adventure merely as an added fillip, a ploy aimed at setting off the familiar pyrotechnics of slapstick and buffoonery. Roy Crane was the first to break away from the confining conventions of caricature and broad humor by introducing to his strip **Wash Tubbs** the dashing figure of Captain Easy, soldier of fortune (1928). A few months later Harold Foster's **Tarzan** completed this transformation. From this moment on the adventure strip was going to play it straight.

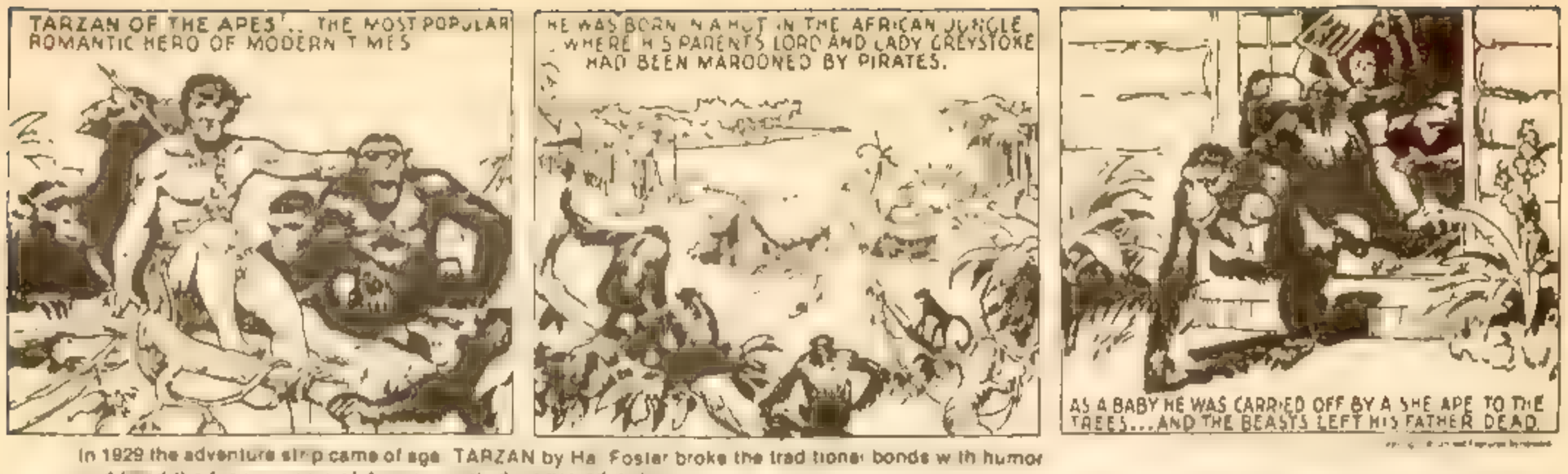
Some interesting esthetic consequences arose from this deliberate choice of interpretation. Artistically the new strip form abandoned the caricatural style and free flowing line of the early cartoon and moved closer to magazine illustration (in its graphic design) and figurative art (in its composition), while aiming at duplicating the sequential flow of the cinema in its effect. This judicious blending of forms gave the new strips the illusion of movement, of reality, of life. At the same time the traditional forms of story telling adopted by the older strips: the comic fable, the morality play, the familiar anecdote, the fairy tale, were all discarded in favor of the narrative continuum of the novel and the heroic tone of the epic. Even as the movies were beginning to talk, the comics were starting to move. They had gone all the way from static contentment to dynamic spectacle

In one respect the continuity strip has a definite advantage over the movie: the uninterrupted flow of happenings unfolding day after day, week after week, gives the strip a quality of timelessness and a diversity of approaches within a single framework that the [illegible] cannot possibly hope to equal. There is an excitement and expectation in the words "to be continued" that should not be dismissed. The adventures go on for all eternity, the end of each episode being but the starting point of the next one, and part of the fascination comes from watching this unceasing parade, this sea of characters, places and events endlessly rolling on.

It has been said that the adventure strip confronts its readers with only a few basic situations. This is true, as it is true with all forms of narrative literature, but the variations upon the primary themes are the measure of any artist. In this respect the cartoonists displayed an astonishing range and an unequalled evocative power. They took over and assimilated into their strips all pre-existing narrative forms; they drew upon the historical novel and the movie serial, the mythological legends and the pulp magazines, the wisdom of folklore and the sensationalism of dime novels, giving them unity and continuity within the unique structural framework of the comic strip

To shape these heterogeneous elements into an artistic whole, each cartoonist had to find his own individual style. Two distinct approaches began to emerge, each carrying its own flavor and dash. In the first one, text and picture would ideally combine to tell the story in purely narrative and graphic terms. This became Hal Foster's (and later

The body of this article represents three chapters from Maurice Horn's forthcoming anthology, "THE MASTERPIECES OF THE COMICS" to be published in the near future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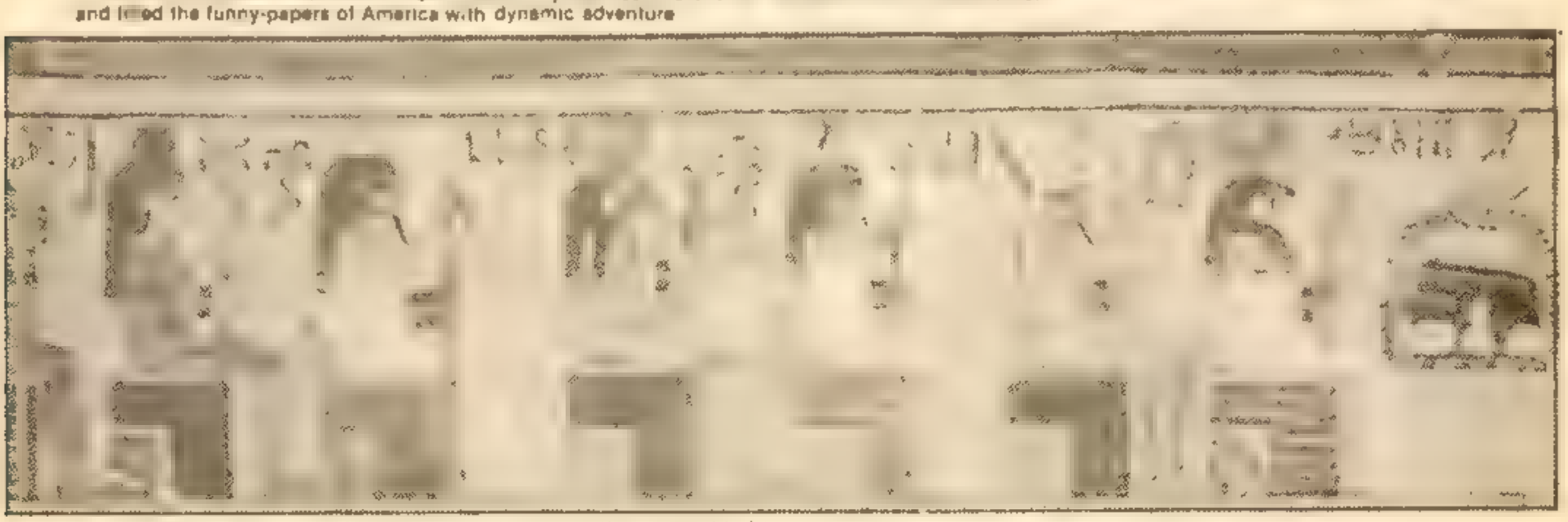
AS A BABY HE WAS CARRIED OFF BY A SHE APE TO THE TREES...AND THE BEASTS LEFT HIS FATHER DEAD

In 1929 the adventure strip came of age TARZAN by Ha Foster broke the trad tiona bonds w th humor and l ed the funny-papers of America with dynamic adventure



To the Egyptians, the visual history of a man's life was the passport to heaven
No person of importance could be buried without such a mural of achievements painted upon the tomb walls.

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GOSH! WHAT AN ESCAPE
WELL I GUESS I'D HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT THAT
SHE THEN BITTERLY ASSAILED ME!
WE HAVE BEEN DECEIVED! WE THOUGHT THEY WERE ALL OUR ANS BUT THESE TWO ARE AMERICANS! SUMMON DUKE KALANG AT ONCE
IT SHALL BE DONE CELESTIAL DOCTOR
WHAT'S THIS? THEY THINK TO FACE HIS ASEPTIC MAJESTY THE CELESTIAL MOGUL HIMSELF? THESE LOW SAVAGE FIGHTING AMERICANS?
YES WE FOUGHT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN 77 AND IN 07 AND BY THE EAGLE OF FREEDOM WE CAN DO IT ONCE MORE IN 2530 IF YOU CAN'T LISTEN TO REASON!
TO BE CONTINUED 24?

Oddly enough BUCK ROGERS began on the same day January 7 1929 as TARZAN A though the drawings were crude and clumsy, the entire country was captivated by the refreshing inventiveness and fantasy the science fiction strip provided.

The ancient Greeks could never resist the temptation to paint the exploits of their mythological heroes
This example relates the fabled adventures of Hercules—the first popular super-hero.

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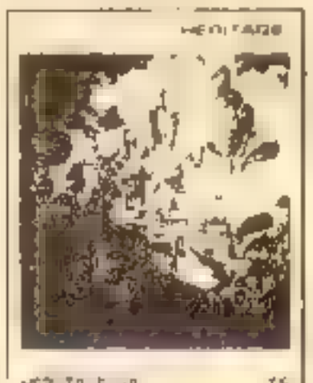

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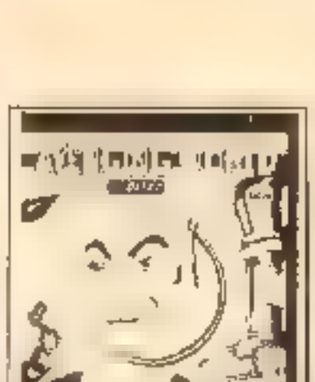

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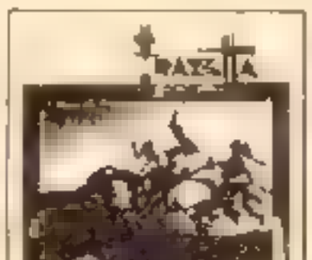

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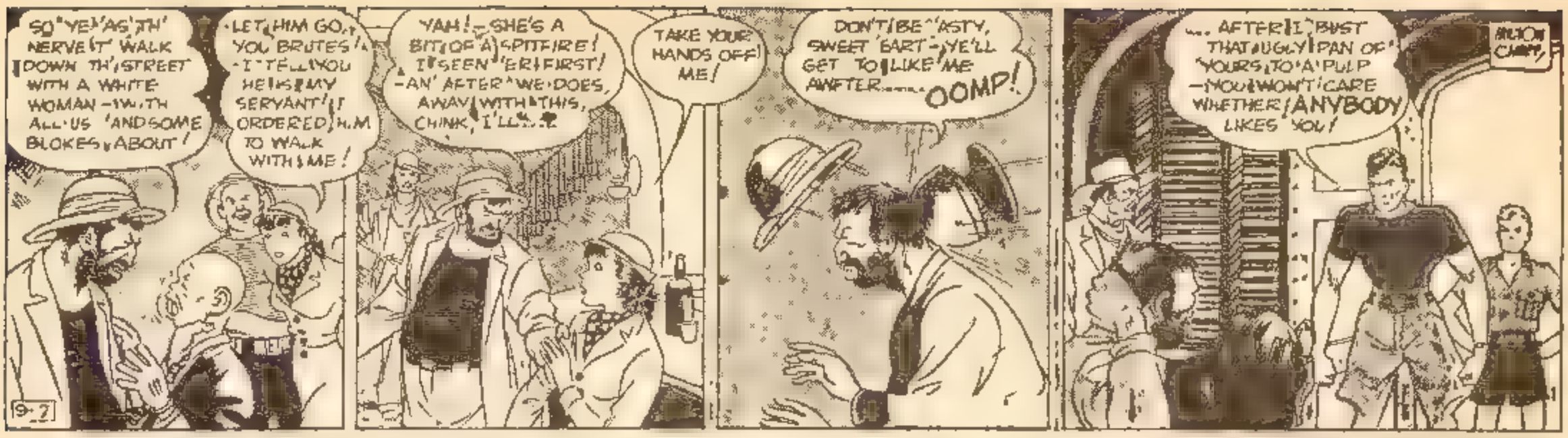
SO YE'AS 'TH' NERVE T' WALK DOWN TH' STREET WITH A WHITE WOMAN - WITH ALL US 'ANDSOME BLOKES ABOUT!
LET HIM GO, YOU BRUTES! I TELL YOU HE IS MY SERVANT! I ORDERED HIM TO WALK WITH ME!
YAH! - SHE'S A BIT OF A SPITFIRE! I SEEN 'ER FIRST! - AN' AFTER WE DOES, AWAY WITH THIS, CHINK, I'LL...
TAKE YOUR HANDS OFF ME!
DON'T BE 'ASTY, SWEET 'ART - YE'LL GET TO LIKE ME AWFTER..... OOMP!
... AFTER I BUST THAT UGLY PAN OF YOURS TO A PULP - YOU WON'T CARE WHETHER ANYBODY LIKES YOU!
MILTON CANIFF

TERRY AND THE PIRATES by Milton Caniff popularized the soldier-of-fortune, the true adventurer in the comic world.
Pat Ryan, not Terry, is the hero of TERRY AND THE PIRATES

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Burne Hogarth's) trademark. After some initial hesitation, Alex Raymond also adopted this approach. On the other hand, Roy Crane and Noel Sickles devised, and Milton Caniff perfected, a more fluid style of story telling, using dramatic dialogue, and relying chiefly on cinematic techniques: lighting, framing, angle shots, for narrative effect.

In the late twenties then, the strip, freeing itself from its comic origins, was to find again the high road to adventure and heroism. (Some of the early, self styled critics of the medium could not comprehend this transformation; "the funnies aren't funny anymore" they bemoaned in unison, as if the comic-strip was some archaic form, as fixed and unchanging as Egyptian bas-reliefs.) No longer a comic figure or a familiar type, the protagonist of the adventure strip is the direct descendant of the epic hero, the knight errant, the vagabond prince, all the archetypes of mythology and legend. In his modern guise he becomes the adventurer, roaming the world, oblivious of conventional society and contemputous of middle-class pieties, only intent upon the object of his quest. In the thirties the theme was universal. It was at the heart of the novels of Hemingway and Malraux, and occupied the thoughts of Saint-Exupery and Graham Greene. On the screen the heroic theme was sounded time and again in the films of John Ford, Howard Hawks, William Wellman. Crushed by the depression, powerless to check the fateful drift towards a new world war, never did man so desperately need a dream in which he was again master of his fate.

The adventurer, sure of his mission, or simply hearing the call of a distant drummer, became the chief attraction of the feature, its drawing card. Pat Ryan, not Terry, is the true hero of **Terry and the Pirates**. Captain Easy is the character the reader is interested in, not Wash Tubbs, and Tarzan, Jungle Jim, Scorchy Smith never leave any doubt as who is in charge of their respective strips. What gives these characters their nobility is neither birth nor wealth, but the purity and intransigence of their calling. Tarzan is a lord and Pat Ryan is a beachcomber, but they are both aristocrats committed to a way of life.

Even when he is gainfully employed, the hero has a profession in keeping with his independent spirit. Jungle Jim and Ted Towers are animal trappers, Tim and Spud (**Tim Tyler's Luck**) are scouts in a vaguely paramilitary outfit with ample time off for their own pursuits. Aviation plays a great part in the hero's occupations. Aviation strips, also born in the late twenties (**Scorchy Smith, Skyroads, Tailspin Tommy**) merge into the adventure strip. Their characters become adverturers who happen also to be pilots. Conversely the plane becomes the all-purpose tool of the adventurer, the means of his mission, and the instrument of his fate. It is the symbol of man's most enduring dreams, the dream of flight, the dream of unlimited freedom, and of lost horizons.

The same nonchalance characterizes the hero's field of operations. If Scorchy Smith and Captain Easy roam the entire length and breadth of the planet, others modestly claim only one continent, or even one small part of the earth. As everybody knows, Africa is Tarzan's domain (although he seems willing to share it with Tim and Spud), Pat Ryan and Terry make China their own, Jungle Jim carves out south east Asia for himself, leaving India to Ted Towers. The names in the strips sing as so many calls to adventure: Singapore, Timbuctu, Hong Kong, the Amazon, Borneo, Khyber Pass. In the bleak environment of the depression years, they conjure up visions of excitement and color.

It would be foolish to think that these strips provided only cheap escapism to their readers. This is part of their appeal, of course, but they also strike a deeper and more universal nerve. Their heroes, whether by design or by necessity, because it is the nature of the form, go back to the founts of our collective memories and aspirations. In their fights against blood-thirsty pirates, international spies, power-mad potentates, they renew the age old duel which is forever pitting the Protagonist against the Antagonist. All the ancient myths are revisited, redefined, reinterpreted. Jason's quest of the Golden Fleece, Perseus and Andromeda, Hercules' labors, the war of the Gods and the Titans. Far from being a stupor-inducing drug, as some ill-informed critics have charged, the best of the adventure strips bring out a needed catharsis.

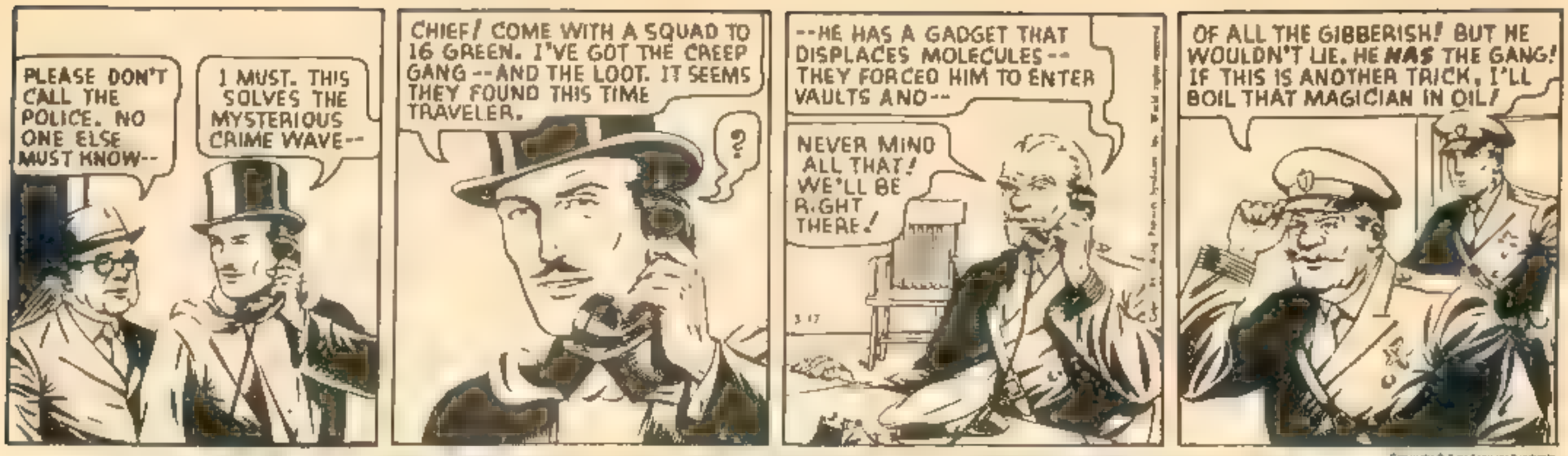
Let us not forget, however, that the comic-strip, as exemplary and symbolic as it sometimes may be, is first and foremost a narrative form, a way to tell a story in words and pictures. The narrative complexity of the adventure strip, the demands of plot and characterization, very often required the assistance of a specialized scriptwriter. But it always remained for the artist to translate the story into a visual form. In this respect, the comic-strip artist's role is much the same as the movie director's. With a few notable exceptions the cartoonist can be considered the real author of the strip, and whatever art is present is his, and his alone.

The high point of the adventure strip was reached some time at the end of the thirties. Already more threatening dangers were on the horizon, as there were more immediate enemies to combat. The conversion of the adventurer into the defender of home and country was as anti-climactic as it was inevitable. The war did not contribute a single new theme to the adventure strip (that the adventure strip contributed mightily to the war effort is part of history). Myth and reality do not mix so easily. The very intemporality of the comic-strip ran counter to the actuality of the conflict. Artistically the war was an almost complete loss.

With the return of peace the cartoonists tried to recreate the free-wheeling ways of an earlier, more innocent era. But the adventure strip proved a phenomenon so representative of the thirties that all it could do now was to feed upon itself. Buz Sawyer, Steve Canyon, and Johnny Hazard to the contrary, the adventurer had lost his credibility. There was no longer any room left for the outsider, the lone wolf. The whole planet had been staked out, and for his dreams man could only turn inwards.

ADVENTURERS OF SPACE AND TIME

The notion widely prevails that science-fiction in the comics is a latter-day outgrowth of the adventure strip. In point of fact they were born of separate circumstances. Phil Nowlan's and Dick Calkins' **Buck Rogers** made its debut on the very same day—January 7, 1929—as Foster's **Tarzan**. Unlike the


PLEASE DON'T CALL THE POLICE. NO ONE ELSE MUST KNOW--
I MUST. THIS SOLVES THE MYSTERIOUS CRIME WAVE--
CHIEF! COME WITH A SQUAD TO 16 GREEN. I'VE GOT THE CREEP GANG--AND THE LOOT. IT SEEMS THEY FOUND THIS TIME TRAVELER.
?
--HE HAS A GADGET THAT DISPLACES MOLECULES-- THEY FORCED HIM TO ENTER VAULTS AND--
NEVER MIND ALL THAT! WE'LL BE RIGHT THERE!
OF ALL THE GIBBERISH! BUT HE WOULDN'T LIE. HE *WAS* THE GANG! IF THIS IS ANOTHER TRICK, I'LL BOIL THAT MAGICIAN IN OIL!

The fascination with magic and the supernatural is the main attraction of MANDRAKE THE MAGICIAN, rather than the plot itself.
This daily appeared March 17, 1955.

GINGER GALLOPS TOWARD TIM —
THE YOUNG IVORY PATROLMAN LEAPS TO HIS HORSE'S BACK, AS THE HUGE ELEPHANT THUNDERS UP —
LET'S GO, RANG
AT PATROL HEAD-QUARTERS—
HI-CAPT CLARK! HI-SPUD! I TOLD YOU I'D BRING RANG BACK!
GOOD WORK, TIM! —AND YOU'RE HERE JUST IN TIME TO JOIN SPUD ON A SPECIAL DETAIL—!

Many comic strip personalities claimed only a single area of the globe for their exploits.
Africa was TIM TYLER s sacred domain in which to weave his adventures.

adventure theme, science-fiction had had few antecedents in the early comics. Little Nemo in his 1910 journey to the moon and Mars can be accounted the first space hero of the comics, but he had no successors for a long time to come. A few years later, H.C. Greening created a humor strip with a science-fiction theme, **Percy** ("Brains he has nix"). Percy was a mechanical man (the term "robot" hadn't been invented yet) who turned every command of his master into a disaster (not unlike Goethe's sorcerer's apprentice). But the efforts remained desultory.

If science-fiction remained thus largely unrepresented until the late twenties, it was certainly not due to the strangeness of the theme. Edgar Rice Burroughs, Abraham Merritt, H.P. Lovecraft had familiarized the public not only with space travel, alien creatures, and futuristic civilizations, but also with tales of the supernatural and the fantastic. In the movies, the **Invisible Ray** (1920), **The Lost World** (1925) and especially Fritz Lang's **Metropolis** (1927) further popularized the genre as did the innumerable fantasy and science-fiction magazines. If science-fiction did not become established in the comics before the thirties it was due to the lack of a suitable style which could match in visual impact the power of the themes of fantasy. This is nowhere as evident as in the first **Buck Rogers** strips whose crude, clumsy drawings are only saved by the invention and freshness of the story-line.

The stylistic innovations wrought by Foster (whose influence can be seen all through the first years of **Flash Gordon** and **Brick Bradford**) provided a fresh approach, away from the naturalism of **Buck Rogers**, whose panoply of gadgets, pseudo-scientific jargon and inexhaustible technical inventiveness gave way to the more basic plot dynamics of suspense and high adventure.

The strips dealing exclusively or mostly with science-fiction are few in number but their brilliance more than makes up for their relative scarcity. Their efficacy resides in that all the themes of adventure and suspense are magnified and exalted by the strangeness of the surroundings and the ambiguousness of time relationships (in **Brick Bradford**, for instance, the reader is told that the hero's journey into the atoms of a dime, albeit it took almost a year to relate, lasted but a few seconds). In the conventional adventure story there is a sense of time and of place (however contrived), but the science-fiction strips are endowed with practically unlimited freedom; they represent the ultimate in escape. It is therefore no wonder that their themes gradually seeped through many other action strips. We find a lost civilization in **Scorchy Smith** and **Tim Tyler's Luck**, an anti gravitational space station in **Don Winslow of the Navy**, a ray gun in **Radio Patrol** and, today, the space coupe of **Dick Tracy**. The humor strips did not lag behind , and give us a burlesque interpretation of science-fiction themes, from the sky island of **Mickey Mouse** through the time-machine of **Alley Oop** all the way to the screwball inventions of Doctor Wottasnoozle in Segar's **Sappo**.

These, however, are spoofs rather than variations. A more interesting example of the power of the science-fiction motif in the thirties can be found in Frank Godwin's **Connie** which started as a girl strip, flirted briefly with mystery and suspense before becoming a full-fledged science-fiction strip whose heroine braves the dangers of space exploration and alien menaces with the aplomb required by the genre.

A strip such as **Mandrake the Magician** also belongs to this current with its emphasis on the strange and the preternatural (dealing very often with science-fiction themes). The fascination with magic is the main attraction of the strip, rather than the plot itself. We are more interested in the "how" than in the "what," and while the author always manages to give a rational explanation to the various goings-on, the fascination lingers on. With all its pretense to historical accuracy, **Prince Valiant** is clearly part of this same trend that we might call "intemporal." Here the remoteness of the epoch itself provides the necessary distancing from actual experience, and allows the artist to roam at will in a Europe of the dark ages as mythical as the planet Mongo.

All these strips have this in common that they take us to other planets or forgotten worlds, project us ahead into the future or backward into the past—in other words, anywhere but here and now. Theirs is a modern transposition of the world of the fairy tale, the fulfillment of the most utopic human dreams: the desire to esape from this world, to defy the laws of physics and history, to become other.

The archetypal models of these strips are indubitably the epic chronicles of antiquity and the novels of chivalry of the Middle Ages. We find in the fantastic strips the same elements of ritual initiation and obligatory situations as in these earlier works of lore. Odysseus' wanderings find their counterpart in the planet-hopping adventures of Connie;

the whole solar system has now replaced the Mediterranean world of Homer, but the themes remain constant. Launcelot's ordeals at the hands of his love-lady are repeated by Prince Valiant (not coincidentally). We also recognize (and I cite at random) such themes as the lost continent of Atlantis (**Brick Bradford, Mandrake**), the redeemer come from another world (**Flash Gordon**), the quest of the Grail (**Prince Valiant**), the journey to Hades (**Don Dixon, Brick Bradford**), the fairy queen (**Prince Valiant, Flash Gordon**).

These ancient fictions are thinly veiled by a cloak of pseudo-scientific explanations thrown in more as a sop to the editors than as a ploy for the readers The rocket-ship with which Flash Gordon lands on Mongo is as technically unsound as Brick Bradford's time top is scientifically impossible. No matter, science here is another manifestation of magic, and the reader comprehends it as such. When Brick Bradford is transported to the earth's core by way of an underground passage-way, or when Don Dixon reaches the hidden empire through the opening in a volcano, they only follow a path as ancient as the epic of Gilgamesh. The scientific paraphernalia is less a pretense than a pretext for rationalizing personal and universal fantasies.

Artist supreme, Alex Raymond, brought a genius of concept and artistry to the science fiction strip with his unparalleled FLASH GORDON.

This fantasy projection finds its ultimate embodiment in the heroic ideals of the protagonist. We are no longer in contact with the glorified but essentially down to-earth adventurer but with a human being so divorced from human reality that his only resemblance is with the demi-gods of ancient Greece and the knights of medieval legend. His mission is no longer local but cosmic embracing the whole world (earthly or otherwise) and often the future of all mankind. The hero may be grim like Flash Gordon, ebullient like Brick Bradford, wise-cracking like Mandrake, or even vulnerable like Connie (in this case a heroine), he has escaped from the conditions of humankind by some special faculty which gives him mastery over himself and his environment, a **charisma** in the strongest meaning. He has become a demiurge.

The detractors of the form object that the subject matter of the comics is often a pale reflection of literary themes. This is forgetting the visual vocation of the medium. It is true that most plots in the fantasy strips are taken from the novels of Jules Verne, Ridder Haggard, H.G. Wells, E.R. Burroughs, to name a few. But what we remember most is not the hackneyed plot but the surreal imagery, unparalleled in volume and impact in any other visual art. The paintings of Brueghel, the illustrations of Dore pale in comparison with the fantastic output of the cartoonists; and in this area at least even the cinema cannot compete with the product of the human hand and the human imagination, tied as it is to live actors, mechanical gadgets, ludicrous costumes, laughable special effects, and a cumbersome technicology unsuited to the demands of fantasy, except at a tremendous cost in time, effort and money.

In the fantasy strips the imagination of the writers and the artists run wild. Theirs is the imagery of the fable, the dream and the nightmare. Grandiose, inhuman cities contrast with primeval, menacing jungles; the fatuousness of refined court life clashes with the barbaric intrigues of the protagonists. As in dreams, everything seems gigantic, unrestrained. The formidable arrays of clashing armies, the coruscating rocket flights, the grandiose ceremonies, the regal costumes, the superhuman attitudes, all appear to take place on a plane not quite identical with ours. There is a cosmic telescoping of mythologies, as hydras, dragons, griffins, unicorns, winged horses, plumed serpents, three-headed monsters, thunderbirds appear in turns to challenge or assist the hero. Side by side co-exist humanoids, hominians, premental men, civilized men in a vast and synoptic tapestry of man's self-images and man's self-fears. The cumulative effect of all those visions is nothing short of shattering.

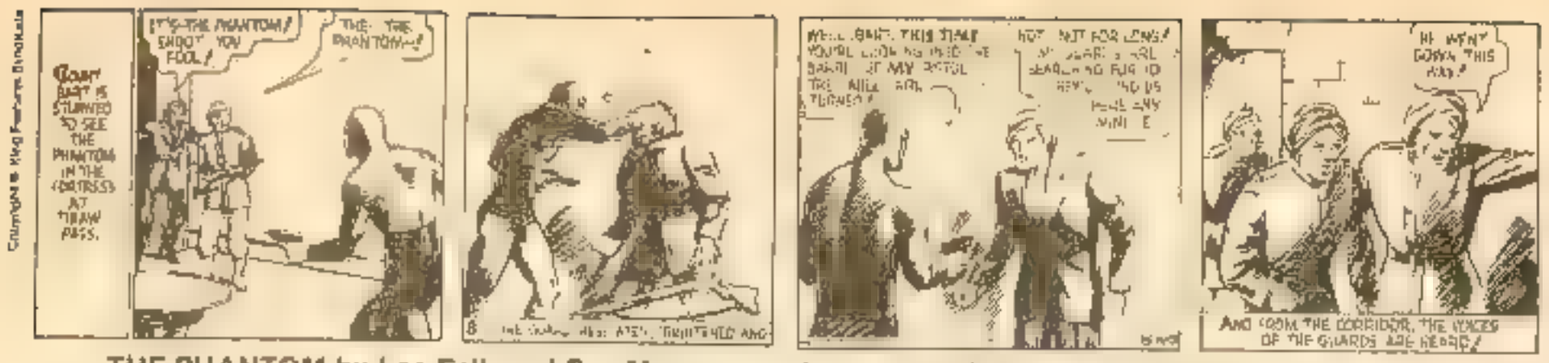
The relation between the comics and surrealism has been noted by all perceptive observers, but nowhere is the similarity as striking as in the fantasy strips. Those who enjoy Rene Magritte's and Max Enrst's perverse depictions of the minutiae of everyday life colliding with the phenomena of extraordinary circumstances should delight in Flash Gordon, "Yale graduate and renowned polo player," setting foot on an alien planet in his pony-riding outfit, or in Connie accepted in the ranks of an inter-planetary expedition after answering a help-wanted ad, not to mention Mandrake always impeccably attired in coat-and-tails and opera hat (probably in an effort to do Magritte's derby-hatted black coated bourgeois one better) in the most inaccessible corners of the earth. As poetry transcends plausibility, and fantasy triumphs over reason, the last vestiges of narrow rationalism are swept away in a swirling vortex of jarring images. Even the language is surrealistic in its odd relevance to incongruous detail and its dead pan literalism in the face of the most ourtrageous contrivances.

From the late forties on, the fantastic strips were to gradually lose their wonderful qualities of unpredictability and poetry, and, under the deadening grip of middle-brow pressures, those few strips now remaining in the field are no more than sorry examples of the grayness and dullness which are now afflicting the comics all over the land.

MAN AND SUPERMAN

The comics, loosely grouped under the above label, form the third panel of the action strip tryptich. Unlike the science-fiction and fantasy strips they do not dwell on wild dreams and outlandish worlds; unlike the strips of straight adventure they do not exhibit a craving for the exotic and the far-away . They are rooted in the traditions, the legends, and the images of the American myth, from the jungle of its teeming and vertical cities to the wilderness of its prairies and the loneliness of its deserts and rocky mountains. They project a peculiar version of the American dream, and the sense of locale and atmosphere is overpowering, never more so than when they purport to take us to some other country.

They are as American as apple pie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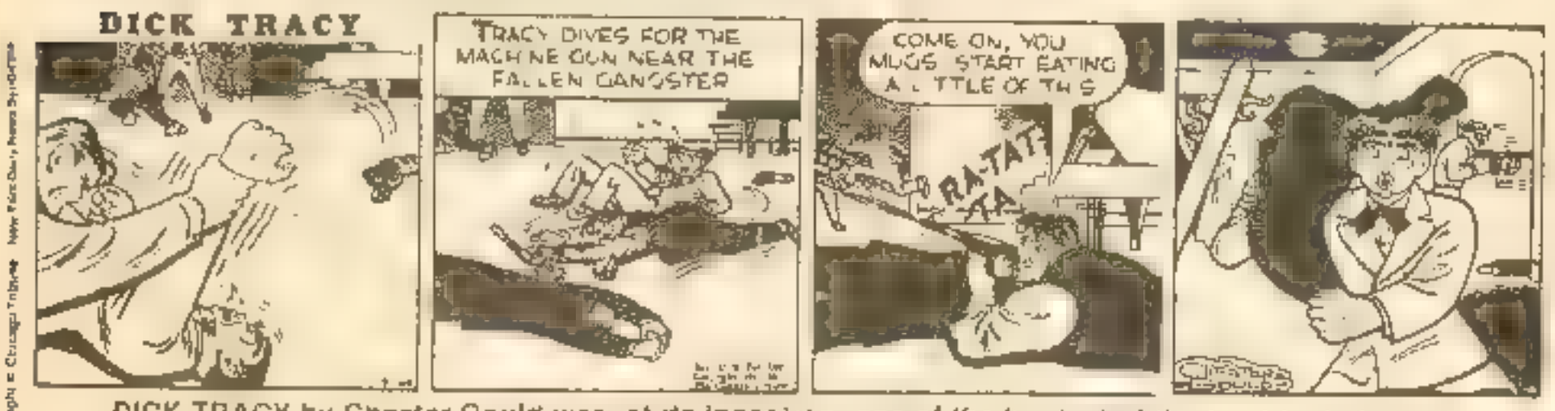
IT'S THE PHANTOM! SHOOT YOU FOOL!
THE- THE PHANTOM!
Count Bart is stunned to see the PHANTOM in the fortress at Tiraw Pass.
HOT HOT FOR LONG!
HI HENRY COMIN' DOWN THIS WAY?
AND FROM THE CORRIDOR, THE VOICES OF THE GUARDS ARE HEARD!

THE PHANTOM by Lee Falk and Ray Moore was always one of the more believable of the masked hero strips. The intricate plotting and high standard of scripting were the ingredients that set it apart from the other super-hero strips.

Copyright © Chicago Tribune
NO SIGNS OF A STRUGGLE EXCEPT ON THE TABLE SEEMS TO BE
A NYPD NEBULE! EVIDENTLY ONE OF KITTRICK'S HEADROSSES WAS NARCOTICS, TOO. BEGINNING TO SEE LIGHT! KITTRICK AND MONTGOMERY, BOTH ADDICTS, BOTH FRIENDS OF CHIP FARADAY!
WHAT'S THIS? A BIRTHDAY CARD AND FROM MOUSEY BLAKE

Alex Raymond ushered in a whole new approach to detective fiction with his RIP KIRBY. Raymond's masterful use of shadow and extreme interest to detail in script and art never faltered. This daily is from the first KIRBY episode of 1946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DICK TRACY
TRACY DIVES FOR THE MACHINE GUN NEAR THE FALLEN GANGSTER
COME ON, YOU MUGS START EATING A LITTLE OF THIS
RA-TAT-TAT

DICK TRACY by Chester Gould was, at its inception one of the hardest of the hard-boiled strips This daily from January 19, 1944 gives an ample taste of the blood-and-guts you came to expect from TRACY

(and violence) and the tales they relate are the tales of the frontier and of the slums, their allegories embodying for the whole world the spirit of what is called America.

More than any other genre the western is the archetypal American form and the western movie its most ideal representation (whatever the claims of its literary ancestors). It is therefore not surprising to see the western strips closely linked with their visual counterparts of the screen whose themes and situations have become so universal that they have taken on the quality of ritual. And yet the comparison, so seductive on the surface, becomes more and more elusive after close examination.

On the one hand it is true that the plots of the strips follow the tried-and-true formulas of the traditional western just as its subjects are taken from the epic sagas of the West: the opening of the frontier, the range wars, the showdowns at high noon, the wide open towns, the intrusion of the railroad. It is impossible not to recognize there the subjects that countless movies have made famous. Yet even there the **graphic** depiction of the landscape and the action lend to these trite re hashings a seeming freshness that is too often absent from the modern western movie. On the other hand the western strips often use themes derived from other genres: mystery (**King of the Royal Mounted**), fantasy (**Bronc Peeler**), masked hero fighting for justice (**The Lone Ranger**).

The same ambivalence is true concerning the locale of the action. If some strips stick to the geographical areas of the American West (**Red Ryder, The Lone Ranger**) the concept of the West in the comic strips is elastic enough to encompass the Northwestern territories of Canada (**King of the Royal Mounted**) as well as the Argentine pampas (**Drago**).

Also the hero of the western strip is rarely the loner depicted in literature and movies; he often belongs to a well-defined social group (King, Bronc Peeler), has family ties (Red Ryder), and (with the exception of the Lone Ranger) has a very definite personal history. Even the Lone Ranger, it should be noted, has by his side his faithful Indian companion, Tonto.

What links all these strips together is not their fidelity to the themes of the legendary West but their atmosphere of unlimited possibilities, their air of unstudied simplicity, their evocation of wide open spaces where man and beast can roam at liberty. Their mood is more lyrical than allegorical and more faithful to the spirit of the comics than to the myth of the West.

Unlike the western strips which took their distances from their literary inspirations, the police strips are very directly related to the novels of mystery and suspense, which is not surprising when we know how many writers have had a hand in developing the genre (Dashiell Hammett who created the character of Secret Agent X-9, Leslie Charteris, Edgar Wallace), not to mention the contribution of such literary characters as Charlie Chan (whose comic strip incarnation owes more to Earl Derr Biggers' novels than to the later movie versions). Every category of mystery writing has found its graphic counterpart in the comic strip: classic tales of detection, suspense stories, espionage stories, gangster stories, hard-boiled stories, and every other aspect of the genre that man can think of, but the most durable and pervasive sources of inspiration have been the conventional thriller (probably derived from the pulp magazines), the hard boiled school of **The Black Mask** (Hammett's contribution was crucial here) and the gangster movies. This combination of blood and violence, tough talk and action, heavy atmosphere and somber mood, the whole punctuated by bizarre angle shots and baroque lighting can be found in varying degrees in all the mystery strips which can thus be categorized in scale from hard (**Dick Tracy, Secret Agent X-9, Red Barry**) to medium (**Rip Kirby, Kerry Drake**) to soft (**Charlie Chan, Don Winslow of the Navy**).

If **Charlie Chan** comes close to its restrained counterpart, **Red Barry** emerges as a disturbingly accurate synthesizing of a Warner Bros. gangster movie of the thirties, and **Dick Tracy** as a peculiarly nasty distillate of the "bloody pulps" (with blood flowing red on Sundays). Far from being mindless entertainment they reflect all too clearly the temper of the times and the city, and they bear closer resemblance to Bertoldt Brecht's chilling ambiguities about good and evil than their authors are willing to admit.

The hero of the police strips (and of the western strips as well) presents an interesting projection of the American psyche: the figure of the vigilante, the man who is so pure of heart and motive, so unselfishly and unerringly right that he does not have to take the law into his own hands—he is the law. His justice is quick ("Shoot them right down on the spot," as Chester Gould put it), his victims unredeemable (this unlike the science fiction or adventure strips where villains often display, albeit in a perverse way, a personality as admirable as the hero's—Emperor Ming in **Flash Gordon** and the Dragon Lady in **Terry and the Pirates** immediately spring to mind). The difference, of course, is that the western and police strips are not concerned as much with escape as with involvement (literary critics may cavil but there is a more honest depiction of American delusions and obsessions in **Red Ryder** and **Dick Tracy** than in the novels of a J.D. Salinger or a John Updike).

But as the world's problems were becoming more and more intractable, it became apparent that ordinary heroes could no longer cope with its complexities. The qualities vested in the western and police hero had to be magnified in an ever-increasing manner until they became so ludicrously extreme that the protagonists no longer bore any relation of common man. The super-hero aberration (best exemplified by **Superman** and his comic-book cohorts) is a peculiarly American phenomenon and

YOU'RE LATE AS USUAL, MORAN;---- THERE'S "THE TOP," ALFRED HALL---- THIS CASE IS-------- CLOSED!
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ALEX RAYMOND 9-11

SECRET AGENT X-9 was the beginning of Alex Raymond's brilliant career. The fast-paced action and hard-hitting drama were the keynote in X-9

has always met with strong resistance in Europe. The idea of ludicrously attired heroes flying in the air and solving every problem by brute force can only be appealing to children (and adults with the minds of children) and deserve only a footnote in any **aesthetic** study of the medium (it is a different matter if a sociological approach to the subject is used).

"Why figures of justice should be hooded in the United States of America will always be a mystery to this writer," wrote Coulton Waugh in his essay, **The Comics**. The authors of masked hero strips give the most outlandish reasons for the protagonist's masquerading, but only Lee Falk's **Phantom** (who belongs to a long dynasty of justice-fighters) and Will Eisner's **Spirit** (who is believed dead) make their disguise credible, due to the logic of their actions and the high quality of writing that goes into the narrative and dialogue.

If all the action-oriented strips exhibit an essential quality that is inherent to the genre, the strips studied in this chapter carry this quality to its paroxystic (and paranoid) extreme. In their single-minded and Sisyphean task of rounding up gangsters, racketeers, spies, and outlaws (only to be faced by more of them in the next episode), the heroes of these strips appear as almost perfect archetypes of Albert Camus' "**homme absurde**" and their adventures a fairly accurate (if unintended) account of the vagaries of the human condition.

Are comics really movies on paper?

"Those artists generally considered great innovators of the comic art form are, by and large, those who are most consciously 'cinematic' in their approach."

From a review of *MOVIE MAKING ILLUSTRATED The Comicbook Filmbook*, INS DE COMICS Summer 1974.

MOVIEMAKING ILLUSTRATED: THE COMICBOOK FILMBOOK makes a great case for it. It's the first book to fully exploit the well-known similarity between comics and film. For students of film, it's an unprecedented "visual textbook" that illustrates film-making methods by using panels and sequences from comics.

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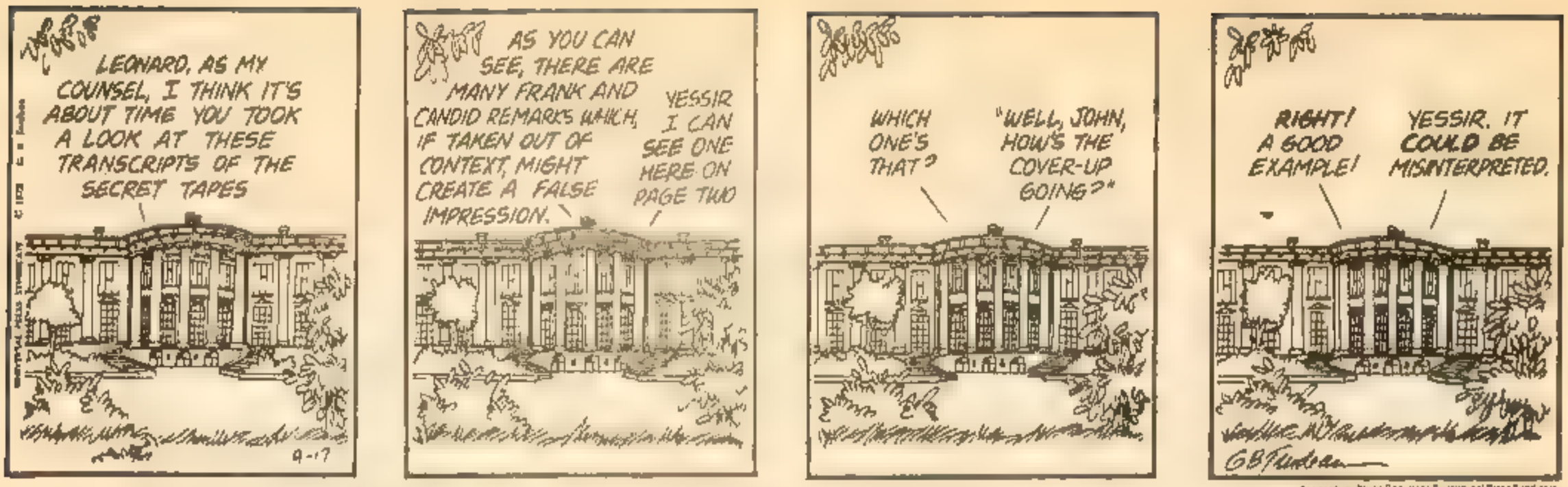

LEONARD, AS MY COUNSEL, I THINK IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU TOOK A LOOK AT THESE TRANSCRIPTS OF THE SECRET TAPES
AS YOU CAN SEE, THERE ARE MANY FRANK AND CANDID REMARKS WHICH, IF TAKEN OUT OF CONTEXT, MIGHT CREATE A FALSE IMPRESSION.
YESSIR I CAN SEE ONE HERE ON PAGE TWO
WHICH ONE'S THAT?
"WELL, JOHN, HOW'S THE COVER-UP GOING?"
RIGHT! A GOOD EXAMPLE!
YESSIR. IT COULD BE MISINTERPRETED.
GBTrudeau
Doonesbury Strips Copyright © Universal Press Syndicate

None of America's sacred institutions are safe from the watchful eye of DOONESBURY. This classic example of Trudeau's biting commentary appeared September 17, 1973

Repression For The Hell Of It

The Doonesbury Scandal!

by J.R. Cochran

Hannah Nixon's boy isn't the only casualty of Watergate although the cancellation of a lowly comic strip may hardly provide much solace. However, even cartoonists have to make a living and, like Presidents, they don't care to have their motives questioned.

Which is why 25-year-old Yale MFA graduate Gary Trudeau feigns innocence whenever his strip "Doonesbury" gets knocked off the funny pages. Since "Doonesbury" is the kind of strip that touches all bases, Watergate is fair game but to hear some editors talk, Trudeau hits too many foul balls.

Subscribers get itchy whenever "Doonesbury" treads Watergate. On February 26th, The San Francisco Chronicle and some 10 other papers quietly shelved an episode in which Presidential aide Al Haig approaches speechwriter Patrick Buchanan on a contingency resignation speech. Picture the White House and two disembodied voices.

"Patrick, I sent for you because I think it's about time you got started on the President's resignation speech..."

"You're kidding, Al."

"Only as a contingency, of course! I'm certain we'll never need it, but it's better to be prepared. I've already written some of the opening lines... Listen .. 'I am not a criminal. I am an innocent public servant being hounded from office by a partisan pack of wolves off on a witch hunt.' You can change the wording a little if you like..."

DOONESBURY's dapper artist Gary Trudeau.

"Whew!"

Buchanan requested the original.

When The Boston Globe killed a series on the whys and wherefores of the Presidential tapes, Leonard Garment asked for the one starring him.

"Leonard, as my counsel, I think it's about time you took a look at these transcripts of the secret tapes. As you can see, there are many frank and candid remarks which, if taken out of context, might create a false impression."

"Yessir. I can see one here on page two."

"Which one's that?"

"Well, John, how's the cover-up going?"

"**Right!** A good example!"

"Yessir. It **could** be misinterpreted."

For Trudeau, the surprise is not so much that the Globe declined (other papers ran it on the editorial page) as that The Washington Post didn't.

Back in May of 1973, in a much celebrated gaff, things were a little different. Former Attorney General Mitchell had yet to be cleared in the IT&T ccase, much the less indicted in the Watergate cover-up. However, that didn't stop Trudeau from begging the question.

"Good news, kiddies!" says disc jockey Megaphone Mark. "Time for another exclusive WBBY" (the call letters of a radio station Trudeau's uncle worked for) "'Watergate Profile!' Today's obituary—John Mitchell—The former Attorney General has in recent weeks been repeatedly linked with both the Watergate caper and its cover-up. It would be a disservice both to Mr. Mitchell and his character to prejudge the man, but everything known to date could lead one to conclude he's guilty. That's **GUILTY**, Guilty, Guilty, Guilty!"

The Post, flagship of the elitist Eastern Establishment line, cancelled. "They were babying their readership,"

says Trudeau. Following suit were a dozen other fellow travellers, including the Globe (after a hasty S.O.S. from the Post).

Asked to supply substitutes, the Universal Press Syndicate declined "since such an action would constitute tacit agreement that the strips were inappropriate." No one ever heard from the 338 other subscribers, not even Trudeau's home-town daily, The Adirondack Enterprise. Luckily, the paper shortage hit just in the nick of time, allowing editors to nix the strip and keep their hands clean at the same time.

"I'd like it never to be said," intoned Post columnist Robert C. Maynard, "that young readers received their first notions about fundamental rights from the comics and concluded that folk hero characters are allowed to declare people guilty in advance of their trials."

Oddly enough, the allegedly guilty parties don't seem to mind.

Twitted in a Sunday strip, deposed German Mafioso John Ehrlichman beseiged Trudeau for an original. On White House stationery 19 days after his resignation.

"I would consider it a privilege," Ehrlichman wrote, "to obtain the original of the attached cartoon. Needless to say it has a very special meaning to me and would be a good addition to the other originals I've received over the years. If you are able to forward the original, would it be possible to mail it to my home address" which he then listed.

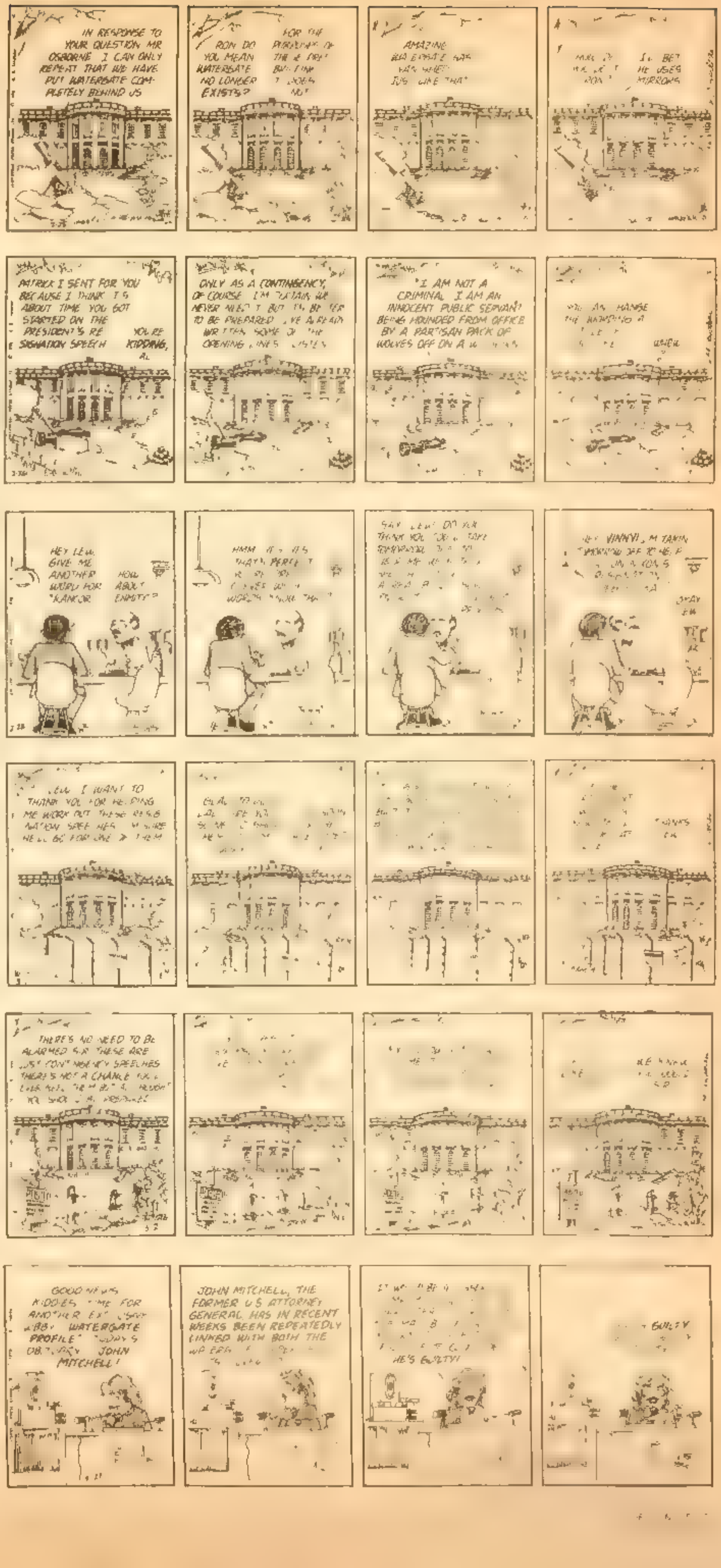
"P.S. I hear my resignation fouled up your following series—Sorry—Next time (!) let me know what you're planning and I'll try to cooperate." Ehrlichman's resignation had "rendered useless" a follow-up in the daily, scheduled for the second week of May 1973.

After yet another letter from Ehrlichman, Trudeau complied. "Out of a spirit of loyal opposition." Not to be outdone, Ziegler (who gave a dramatic reading of his before the White House press corps) and Haldeman (from Ken Clawson and the gang as a going-away present) got slices of the pie as well, leading Trudeau to speculate that "Doonesbury" had achieved "a therapeutic, remedial status" at the White House. Would be collectors and future Presidential staffers note that, while he claims to acknowledge all his mail, Trudeau rarely honors requests for originals. "The publisher needs them for my books."

Watergate notwithstanding, there have been other crises as well. Like the time, the Globe refused to let B.D. call Howard Cosell a card-carrying communist even though Cosell had no complaint. When Trudeau changed the label to "blithering retard," the mental health people complained.

Coldest feet of all are those at The Los Angeles Times. Some 2 years after paying for the Sunday "Doonesbury," they're finally running it.

In spite of everything, The Yale Daily News remains loyal. Five years after it first appeared as "Bull Tales," "Doonesbury" still graces its pages, unscathed. □


IN RESPONSE TO YOUR QUESTION MR OSBORNE I CAN ONLY REPEAT THAT WE HAVE PUT WATERGATE COMPLETELY BEHIND US
RON DO YOU MEAN WATERGATE NO LONGER EXISTS?
AMAZING REAL ESTATE MAN HERE JUS LIKE THAT
I BET HE USES MIRRORS
PATRICK I SENT FOR YOU BECAUSE I THINK IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU GOT STARTED ON THE PRESIDENT'S RESIGNATION SPEECH
YOU'RE KIDDING, AL
ONLY AS A CONTINGENCY, OF COURSE
"I AM NOT A CRIMINAL I AM AN INNOCENT PUBLIC SERVANT BEING HOUNDED FROM OFFICE BY A PARTISAN PACK OF WOLVES OFF ON A
HEY LEW, GIVE ME ANOTHER WORD FOR "RANCOR"
HOW ABOUT ENMITY?
HEY VINNY, I'M TAKIN
LEW I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR HELPING ME WORK OUT THESE PROBS
THERE'S NO NEED TO BE ALARMED SIR THESE ARE
GOOD NEWS KIDDIES TIME FOR ANOTHER EXCITING WATERGATE PROFILE TODAY'S OBJECT JOHN MITCHELL!
JOHN MITCHELL, THE FORMER U.S. ATTORNEY GENERAL, HAS IN RECENT WEEKS BEEN REPEATEDLY LINKED WITH BOTH THE
HE'S GUILTY!
GUILTY

The Comics Code
20 Years Of Self-Strangulation?

by Ed Summer

The Comics Code Authority is 20 years old in 1974. Formed as a result of public and governmental pressure on comic books, a pressure that seemed determined to wipe out the "Scourge of Comics" in the early 1950's, the Code has functioned as a voluntary organization external to any one publisher, that advises all member publishers on the content of their comic books.

Despite the innocuous appearance of the Code Seal, the Code itself is still a controversial organization. Some people hold it in highest esteem, while others feel that the Code has destroyed the creative spark of comic books.

The group of people interviewed for this article are either directly involved with publications affected by the Comics Code, or publish comic-type material outside the Code.

Leonard Darvin, the current head of the Comic Code, came to the Code from a job with the W.R.A. under the Roosevelt Administration, and from a strong legal and administrative background. His organizational abilities alone have probably been responsible for keeping the Code functional.

Carmine Infantino, originally an artist for such comics as **THE FLASH**, is currently the publisher of **National Periodical Publications**, the oldest comic book publishing house. The innovative $1.00 comic books appeared under Infantino's tenure.

Roy Thomas is Editor-in-Chief at **Marvel Comics**. His background includes being an English teacher, and a dyed in the-wool comic fan who wrote prolifically for fanzines before moving up to professional comics where, almost single-handedly, he brought us **CONAN THE BARBARIAN**.

James Warren, the independent of the group, started a unique series of publications in 1957 with **FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND, CREEPY, EERIE, VAMPIRELLA**, and **THE SPIRIT**, which followed, are now some of the most striking of comic type publications, very much in the tradition of E.C., and are not submitted for Code approval.

The Code itself governs the level of taste and, in certain instances, the specific written and drawn content of comic books. It also provides for the specific type of advertising that may appear in Code books.

Responses to the questions below are listed in alphabetical order.

After 20 years of the Comics Code, what would you say have been the positive contributions of the Code to either the industry or the public?

LEONARD DARVIN: The Code made it possible for the comic book to survive as a mass medium for children, acceptable in the home and selling hundreds of millions of copies. Were it not for the Code, comics might have survived as a small, offbeat type of publication for adults, or in the kiddie area like Mickey Mouse.

With competitive trends as they are, if one publisher got into sex, almost inevitably another would get sexier, and so on, until the public would clamp down and say "I don't want my kids to read them!" Though in 1971 we permitted the use of werewolves and vampires, the trend in that direction is not gory in Code approved books, and does not go beyond limits that we would defend for reading by a youngster, maybe not babies, but okay for teenagers.

There's no arbitrary limit on age. The Code, on a sexual level, for example, is no more restrictive than many state laws which say that children under 17 can't be sold a book which shows bare breasts. We have kept within the bounds of 17 or 18. It's up to the individual publisher to decide that he's putting a book out for kids of 7 or 8, or to decide to publish for 17 or older.

The Code can only be justified by the fact that a comic book is essentially a children's reading device. Take that element away from it, then the Code certainly has no place, because I'm against censorship, and I know the publishers are against censorship generally for adults.

When you deal with children, even today, the feeling that we've gone beyond, in sophistication, the point where we were in 1954, is ridiculous. When it comes to children, people are still as sensitive as ever. There is always the danger of the government stepping in as is happening right now with standards for children's advertising on television.

If we didn't have the Code, competitive forces and periphery people, who are out of the business today, would come back into it, abuse the medium and kill the whole thing, as far as the mass medium goes.

CARMINE INFANTINO: It helped considerably by keeping out the lunatic fringe element. There would have been an awful lot of guys in there publishing who are not around now because of the Code.

ROY THOMAS: The most positive one is the fact that there is a comic book industry at all today. There was a time in the fifties when it looked as if the whole industry would go under because of the excesses of the few, or even the many. Now with self-censorship, that's been very well taken care of.

JAMES WARREN: The Comics Code had done many things for many groups. Start with the publishers who got under the wire and had their stuff "acceptable" to the Code. This has been wonderful to them, because it represented a sort of closed shop in which they set up their own standards as to who they're going to let into the ball game. Now for the publishers who fit into the Code, it was terrific because, for a while, nothing would compete with them unless it was in the range of what fit into the Code. As long as they, themselves, made the rules which they had to comply with, that was fine. So if you happened to have an **ARCHIE** going at the time, great, if you didn't happen to, you were out of business.

Now, what benefits did the public get when Bill Gaines was torn apart unmercifully under the lights of the Senate Investigating Committee? Ask yourself what benefit you got from pulling Gaines apart. It is an unfair thing that I equate with the McCarthy days. What were Kefauver's political motives? It did him a lot of good, got him on television at Gaines' expense.

What did the public get, some good television viewing? Actually, I don't think the public got anything out of it, it was shameful.

The news media who covered it beautifully got a lot out of it. They got good copy at the expense of a human being named Bill Gaines.

What have been the negative or non-constructive effects of the Comics Code in the last 20 years?

DARVIN: You have to look at the

answer in two ways.

Certainly in the course of the thousands of decisions we have made, we might have made mistakes and restricted the publication of some of the wrong things. Overall, especially since 1971 when we revised the code, taking into account the contemporary feeling about nudity for example, which is much more liberal than it was in 1954, we have not restricted creativity.

I think that we have promoted creativity by eliminating broad areas of emphasis on gore. The publishers looked for different areas because they had to. They went into social significance, the art became better, they had to sell books on another basis.

INFANTINO: None. I'm in favor of the Code. At one point recently, the Code looked as if it were in dire jeopardy because of financial problems. The boys on the Code and myself stood up and said we would back it up 100% to keep it going. It's a necessity. We really feel that.

You can be just as creative within the framework of those rules as you can without them. Everybody says that those rules are hampering them, but I think that there's something wrong with the people who complain. It makes you think a little harder to be creative, there's nothing wrong with that.

THOMAS: It makes certain things impossible. The Code has assumed the fact that the industry would be aimed almost entirely at children. In the fifties, there was a chance for some kind of break-through, when the books were beginning to appeal to a slightly older audience. They were halted because someone suddenly said, "You've gone too far, go no further."

The question is whether the comics should be kept for kids just because they are read partly by kids, or whether they should have been allowed to grow naturally.

It took years for the comics to begin to catch up with other media. Even now we are not allowed to do things which are everyday occurances in movies or T.V. as regards to language and themes. All these forbidden things are done on prime-time T.V. shows when everyone knows that they are going to be watched by 8 year old kids. But if the same kids see it in the comic books, somehow you can pin comics right there and say: This is terrible!!!

WARREN: There might have been some young people who could have been inspired, whose imagination might have been lifted and who might have gotten some great pleasure out of the comics they never got to read because the comics were never published. People like budding Bradburys, Fellinis, and Kubricks; anybody who had their imaginations soar to the heights when they were kids and read comics. Now I'm not saying that the comics had to include the kind of things that Bill Gaines was vilified for, but I think that there was a middle ground between the **ARCHIE**s and the stuff that Gaines was putting out.

Code of the Comics Magazine Association of America

Code for Editorial Matter

General Standards—Part A

1 Crimes shall never be presented in such a way as to promote distrust of the forces of law and justice, or to inspire others with a desire to imitate criminals

2 No comics shall explicitly present the unique details and methods of a crime, with the exception of those crimes that are so farfetched or pseudoscientific that no would-be lawbreaker could reasonably duplicate

3 Policemen, judges, government officials and respected institutions shall not be presented in such a way as to create disrespect for established authority, if any of these is depicted committing an illegal act, it must be declared as an exceptional case and that the culprit pay the legal price

4. If crime is depicted, it shall be as a sordid and unpleasant activity

5 Criminals shall not be presented in glamorous circumstances, unless an unhappy end results from their ill-gotten gains, and creates no desire for emulation

6. In every instance good shall triumph over evil and the criminal punished for his misdeed

7 Scenes of excessive violence shall be prohibited Scenes of brutal torture excessive and unnecessary knife and gun play, physical agony, gory and gruesome crime shall be eliminated

8 No unique or unusual methods of concealing weapons shall be shown, except where such concealment could not reasonably be duplicated

9 Instances of law enforcement officers dying as a result of a criminal's activities should be discouraged, except when the guilty, because of their crime, live a sordid existence and are brought to justice because of the particular crime

10 The crime of kidnapping shall never be portrayed in any detail, nor shall any profit accrue to the abductor or kidnapper. The criminal or the kidnapper must be punished in every case

11. The letters of the word "crime" on a comics magazine cover shall never be appreciably greater in dimension than the other words contained in the title. The word "crime" shall never appear alone on a cover

12 Restraint in the use of the word "crime" in titles or subtitles shall be exercised

Part B

1. No comics magazine shall use the word horror or terror in its title. These words may be used judiciously in the body of the magazine." (*The word horror or terror in a story title in the body of the magazine has been ruled to be an injudicious use and therefore is not permitted.)

2 All scenes of horror, excessive bloodshed, gory or gruesome crimes, depravity, lust, sadism, masochism shall not be permitted

3. All lurid, unsavory, gruesome illustrations shall be eliminated

4. Inclusion of stories dealing with evil shall be used or shall be published only where the intent is to illustrate a moral issue and in no case shall evil be presented alluringly nor so as to injure the sensibilities of the reader

5. Scenes dealing with, or instruments associated with walking dead, or torture shall not be used. Vampires, ghouls and werewolves shall be permitted to be used when handled in the classic tradition such as Frankenstein, Dracula and other high calibre literary works written by Edgar Allen Poe. Saki (H H Munro), Conan Doyle and other respected authors whose works are read in schools throughout the world.

6 Narcotics or Drug addiction shall not be presented except as a vicious habit

Narcotics or Drug addiction or the illicit traffic in addiction-producing narcotics or drugs shall not be shown or described if the presentation:

(a) Tends in any manner to encourage, stimulate or justify the use of such narcotics or drugs, or

b) Stresses, visually, by text or dialogue, their temporarily attractive effects, or

(c) Suggests that the narcotics or drug habit may be quickly or easily broken, or

(d) Shows or describes details of narcotics or drug procurement, or the implements or devices used in taking narcotics or drugs, or of the taking of narcotics or drugs in any manner, or

(e) Emphasizes the profits of the narcotics or drug traffic, or

(f) Involves children who are shown knowingly to use or traffic in narcotics or drugs, or

g) Shows or implies a casual attitude towards the taking of narcotics or drugs, or

(h) Emphasizes the taking of narcotics or drugs throughout, or in a major part, of the story, and leaves the denouement to the final panels

Part C

All elements or techniques not specifically mentioned herein, but which are contrary to the spirit and intent of the Code, and are considered violations of good taste or decency, shall be prohibited

Dialogue

1. Profanity, obscenity, smut, vulgarity, or words or symbols which have acquired undesirable meanings—judged and interpreted in terms of contemporary standards—are forbidden

2. Special precautions to avoid disparaging reference to physical afflictions or deformities shall be taken

3. Although slang and colloquialisms are acceptable, excessive use should be discouraged and wherever possible good grammar shall be employed

Religion

1 Ridicule or attack on any religious or racial group is never permissible.

Costume

1. Nudity in any form is prohibited. Suggestive and salacious illustration is unacceptable

2. Females shall be drawn realistically without undue emphasis on any physical quality

Marriage and Sex

1 Divorce shall not be treated humorously nor represented as desirable

2 Illicit sex relations are not to be portrayed and sexual abnormalities are unacceptable

3 All situations dealing with the family unit should have as their ultimate goal the protection of the children and family life. In no way shall the breaking of the moral code be depicted as rewarding

4. Rape shall never be shown or suggested. Seduction may not be shown

5. Sex perversion or any inference to same is strictly forbidden

Code for Advertising Matter

These regulations are applicable to all magazines published by members of the Comics Magazine Association of America, Inc. Good taste shall be the guiding principle in the acceptance of advertising.

1. Liquor and tobacco advertising is not acceptable.

2. Advertisement of sex or sex instruction books are unacceptable

3. The sale of picture postcards, "Pin-ups," "art studies," or any other reproduction of nude or semi-nude figures is prohibited

4 Advertising for the sale of knives, concealable weapons or realistic gun facsimiles is prohibited

5. Advertising for the sale of fireworks is prohibited

6. Advertising dealing with the sale of gambling equipment or printed matter dealing with gambling shall not be accepted

7. Nudity with meretricious purpose and salacious postures shall not be permitted in the advertising of any product clothed figures shall never be presented in such a way as to be offensive or contrary to good taste or morals

8 To the best of his ability, each publisher shall ascertain that all statements made in advertisements conform to fact and avoid misrepresentation

9 Advertisement of medical health, or toiletry products of questionable nature are to be rejected. Advertisements for medical, health or toiletry products endorsed by the American Medical Association, or the American Dental Association, shall be deemed acceptable if they conform with all other conditions of the Advertising Code.

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REALITY 2 Color covers by TODD and KALUTA, strips by KALUTA, CHAYKIN, art by WRIGHTSON, FRAZETTA, CRANDALL, WILLIAMSON and others. $2.00

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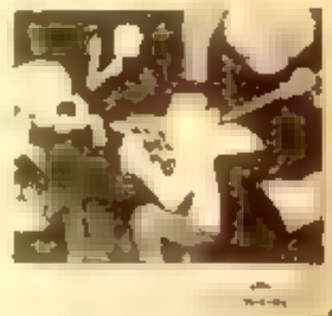

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Editor: John Benson

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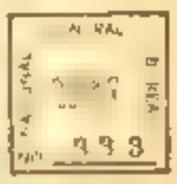

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There is a generation of kids that never read anything but Code comics who would be better off as budding creative people had they read other comics. I'm looking up to people who have said this to me time and again, even in print. Ray Bradbury has said that he loved his youth, and loved the comics he read, and loved the kind of stuff that inspired him to go on and become a creative writer. Who is to say that we haven't lost out on a couple of Ray Bradburys because the stuff that the Code allowed was not enough to inspire them.

Given the Comics Code as it exists today, what changes or alterations would you make in the Code if you had a completely free hand in the matter?

DARVIN: The Code is a simple set of rules, easy to understand. However, when you apply it to a particular situation it's not quite that simple, because there can be two views of it, and both can either be said to violate the Code or to conform to it. With the type of interpretation that we've developed, we occasionally will be very severe about holding to the very letter of the Code, and at other times relax a little—depending on the situation.

I don't think that the Code needs revision right now. We can live with it, and the publishers can live with it. We certainly have not had any complaints from the publishers in the last few years.

INFANTINO: We did make changes in the Code when it was reshaped 2 years ago. We made clarification of areas which were kind of nebulous at the time. Mystery—some call it Horror—had a clarification: I said, what's wrong with the stories of Poe and de Maupassant? If they're classics and they're good enough for a kid to read in school and for a teacher to teach him, why can't we have things like that under the Code? The group agreed. We bent the rules a little so that the Code would open up a little further, but not take the situation to the stages where some of the non-Code people have gone.

THOMAS: It would probably have to be that I would want to see no Code at all. Any changes that would be made at this point are really pretty minimal. I could talk about ridiculous restrictions: we could have vampires, but not zombies. There's a provision that rape cannot be shown in any way, even the suggestion that there might have been a rape. I think that's rather a mistake. It means you can approach realism from certain angles, and then suddenly there's one thing that's completely shut off to you. It can make the whole story suddenly very artificial.

The language restriction should be lifted. But as long as we're aiming primarily at kids, I don't think we would do much more anyway. Many of our audience at various ages, including teenagers, not just young kids, object to the swear words. If we use a tiny bit of suggestive nudity, most people say that if it's done tastefully, it should be done. Other people object to it in any way shape or form.

All in all, the only way to do anything outside the Code is not to change the Code, but simply to do a magazine which does not fall under the Code at all. The black and white magazines just use those provisions of the Code which make sense to you, depending on what you think your audience is, and not those that don't make any sense to you, and feel you shouldn't bother with.

WARREN: I'd have to think about that before I could give you a snap answer. I would recommend changes, but before I could give you an intelligent answer, I would want to familiarize myself with the Code itself which I am not intimately familiar with because I don't have to answer to it.

Given the overall nature of the Comic Book Code as it exists today, do you feel that we will continue to have a Code for another 20 years?

DARVIN: I think everything ends. I take a rather somber view of the situation. Too many people take the

Either the comics have come a long way, or the CODE censor who approved MARVEL's MASTER OF KUNG FU #20 was suffering from a severe blinking problem at the time. Such vices as gambling, drinking, brutality, and semi-nudity ... all in just two panels.

Code for granted, unfortunately. Some people, not only among the fans, who always had a kind of negative view towards it—I think wrongfully—and perhaps some of the editors—although we're pretty friendly these days—but the wholesalers and retailers feel that the Code isn't so important anymore; it isn't really necessary. The United States Supreme Court Miller decision will put increasing pressure on wholesalers and retailers to know the exact content of their books, something which may have serious repercussions.

I don't think the Code will last forever. As to its tenure, when I first got a job on the Code in 1955 as a trouble shooter, I didn't think it would last 6 months. I thought that the heat on the Comics Industry was off at the time. The Code was expensive and the money just wasn't forth coming. The publishers were going into other fields, and I thought 6 months would see the end of it. Well, I've been here almost 19 years, so I'm not a good fortune teller. But it could last another 20 years, or it could die next week, neither of which would surprise me. I only say that it's needed.

INFANTINO: I hope it does. As long as I'm here, I'll certainly be a backer of it. It's an awfully rough job to evaluate and have one publisher screaming about another publisher: he's doing this and he's doing that. We've got a tremendous guy on the job, and I hope the Code lasts forever, it's very important.

I don't think that it'll stay in the same form, nothing does. Things either change or die. The Code will evolve. Sophistication may come in areas we don't even expect, but I'm sure it will come.

THOMAS: I think the Code, or something like it will be around if comics in their present form are around. The color Comics Code will exist as long as the color comics exist.

Most of the unfavorable provisions, the really silly ones against zombies and girls with anything but a 33 inch bust, have mainly been done away with. I think that while a certain amount of silliness is still left in the Code, that if we keep the color comics, we might as well keep the Code.

I wouldn't like to see the Code expanded to the black and white magazines, because the story market is older. The Code was designed to protect a different audience, younger, which does not form the sole readership of comics. Now a more intelligent audience, an older audience for comics exists that has to be satisfied some other way, and I would really be very much against extending the Code into some other form.

The Code should stay right where it is, live or die depending on whether color comic books aimed almost exclusively at young children lives or dies. I like color comics, I would not like to see the black and white format dominate the field. I therefore hope that the Code has a long, long life.

WARREN: I don't know the answer, but I'm inclined to say: No, it won't. At least not in its present form. I wouldn't want anything to continue for 20 years in its present form because taste changes within each year, and sometimes in even less time. If I had anything to do with it, I would review the Code every six months.

Although the Comics Code terms itself "Self-regulation," and the members of the Code do indeed belong to it on a voluntary basis, it has been suggested that the Code constitutes a form of censorship. It has also been suggested that the Code has neutralized any attempted censorship of comic books. At any rate, the line between regulation and censorship is thin. How do you feel about this question?

DARVIN: I am personally opposed to censorship of any kind. It would tend to censor ideas and political thinking which would be a thing very opposite to my concept of what this country is all about. What I'm talking about now is state censorship which I'm against for comic books as well as for adults.

Self-regulation is what we do. The rules by which we operate are set by the very people that we're regulating. As an administrator, I don't make the Code. I have no power to make or change the Code. I may make recommendations, but

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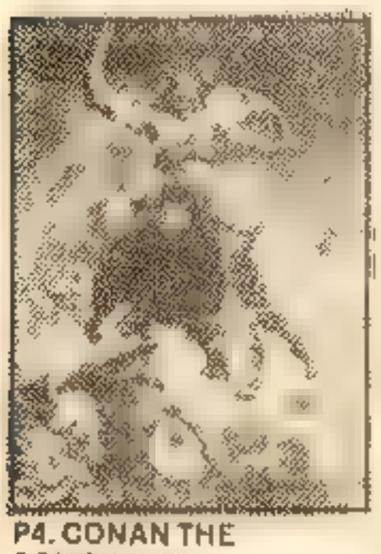

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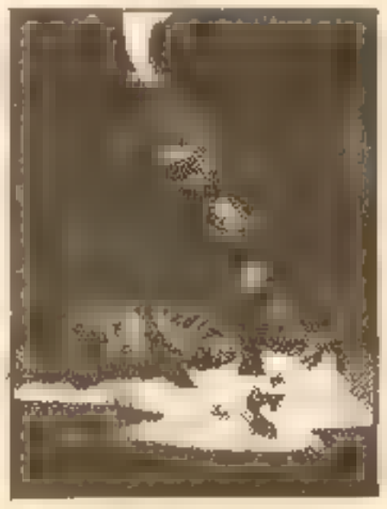

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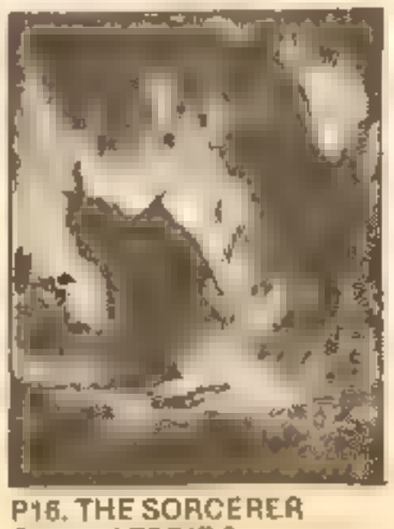

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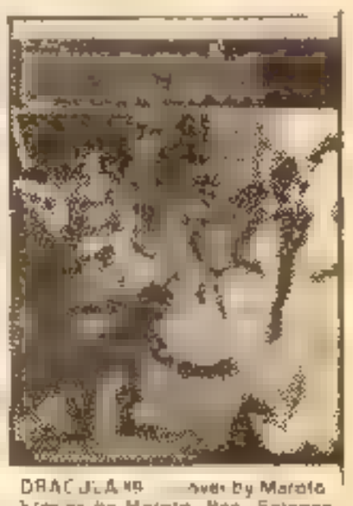
DRACULA #6 . Cover by Maroto Stories by Maroto. Bea Solsona Carlos and Sic

DRACULA #7 Cover by Maroto. Stories by Maroto Bea. Solsona and Sic

DRACULA #8 Cover by Sic Stories by Maroto. Bea Solsona and Sic



DRACULA #9 Cover by Maroto Stories by Maroto, Bea, Solsona and Sic

DRACULA # 0 Cover by Maroto Stories by Maroto Bea Solsona and Sic

DRACULA # Cover by Stories by Maroto Bea and Sic

DRACULA #1 Cover by Maroto Stories by Maroto Bea Solsona and Sic

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the Board of Directors, on which sits a representative of every publisher and distributor, makes the Code. They set the standards. So self-regulation at the very basis is something not imposed from without, which is censorship, but imposed from within.

Governmental censorship would be the worst type, because that would have to be political censorship. Also if the wholesalers got together and decided we will not handle A, B, and C type of publication—that would be external censorship, too. But this Code is made by the very publishers who are putting out this material. Naturally, they are doing it in reference to public reaction, but nevertheless, they could choose not to do it that way, they could do it another way.

Secondly, no publisher can be forced to join the Code, he's free to choose. One of the major publishers, **Gold Key** is not a member of the Code. There is also a vast underground comic field and they're functioning without the Code. **Gold Key** is very cooperative with the Code, but has never joined. When we revised the Code, **Gold Key** sent for copies for their editors. Their editor, Joe Connaughton, is a very fine, friendly fellow. Recently we went after them to join, but they wrote back that they felt that their type of material did not need Code supervision. We resent that attitude because if other publishers took it, we'd have problems. We cause revision in less than 15% of the books that come to us, so 85% or more don't need Code supervision, but they ALL need the Seal to assure the public. **Gold Key** indicated that they would join if they didn't have to submit their books in advance, they don't want to do that.

INFANTINO: I think that the notion of censorship is ridiculous. First of all, we the group that participate in the Code, who keep it alive, accept the corrections that Mr. Darvin will make in our work. By being a member, we're accepting rules in the framework that we have set up.

From time to time, many of the editors, including mine, will deviate here or there, and the Code steps in and says we're over the line, but the important thing is that we're building our own rules, and we're supporting this thing ourselves, so it is self-regulation.

It's not censorship in the negative sense. You can be creative within the framework of those rules that were set up in the Code; it makes you think even further.

THOMAS: It's strange because you could look at it either way. Actually, I think it does both. It is, of course, self-regulation because the comic companies pay the bill. But if you really have self-regulation, in the freer sense, where every company, editor, publisher, regulates himself, then you have nothing at all. That's basically what existed before 1954. You HAD self-regulation; every company regulated itself. As a result, you had people playing baseball with parts of other people's bodies—very gory stories, indefensible by almost any standards when aimed at an audience that was obviously composed at least moderately of young kids.

So the next step from that type of self-regulation, which is almost no regulation, is for the companies to get together and to hire an independent authority. Darvin is not employed by any one person. He can be talked with, argued with, even changed, if all the publishers get together and want and agree to change things. That's self regulation which regulates by an independent authority that neither John Goldwater or Stan Lee or Carmine Infantino can do anything about, and I think it's a fairly healthy thing.

It's better than the kind of regulation which would have come down from the Congressional Commission 20 years ago. Better than what would have grown out of the mood of a public stirred up by a handful of well-publicized abuses, misinterpreted evidence by Dr. Wertham and others—however well-intentioned it might have been—taking the good and the bad and lumping them all together. Any Congressional Commission growing out of that atmosphere would have been so regulatory that we would have had nothing left but **CASPER, THE FRIENDLY GHOST**, and I'm not sure

Lack of THE COMICS CODE SEAL OF APPROVAL doesn't mean a publisher will fail. GOLD KEY, WARREN, and the Underground Comix have found their own non-CODE books just as successful.

that **CASPER** would have survived merely because he was a ghost. People grumble about Judge Murphy, the first head of the Code, but what he did was probably much less, and at least had a chance of gradually evolving and changing, whereas with the Congressional Commission interpreting the rules forever, the comic industry would never have had enough clout to force them to change. We probably came off better with the Comic Code than we would otherwise.

I'm in this weird situation of disliking the Comic Code, not the people involved, but the Code itself and its regulations, and at the same time realizing that it did comics a service which many of the excessive, more rabid E.C. Fan Addicts—of which I was one, but a more moderate one—would abhor. They abhor the idea that the Comic Code could have done anything except prevent E.C. from going onward and upward, as though Valhalla was just around the corner and the Code stepped in and stopped it. What was really around the corner was really even more gruesome stuff, along side that would probably have evolved, also, some more mature stuff. We would have had the very good comics and the very bad. What we got after the Comic Code was very bland comics for about 10 years. Gradually, things came out of that: the first National super hero, the bland career of the super hero, then Marvel, and then Warren from outside in the bleachers somewhere. Just Warren's pressure on the comics companies as somebody competing with them and a new generation of artists and writers who have grown up since the Comic Code was evolved, all worked together to make the world ready for change in the Comic Code.

WARREN: When you have a censorship kind of thing, it is awfully dangerous. When one or two individuals say that this is okay for kids and this isn't—well, what is a kid? Anybody who is 7 years old? Well, I've got a kid, let's say, who is 7, has an IQ of 190 and does calculus. Is that an exception? We're talking about general overall, where there is not any such thing as a general.

The implications are that the Code says: Thou shalt not depict the following... Thou shalt, it is okay to, depict the following ... That's the basic factual definition of any kind of censorship.

There is nothing voluntary about it at all if, when you want to be in the comic book business, you've got to be in the Code. How voluntary is it if the heirarchy of the Code is going to say to a wholesaler and retailer to carry only Code merchandise and you're guaranteed of no problems. What kind of gun are they going to hold up to the heads of these people. Put up your hands, or don't put up your hands, they say. Well, I have to put up my hands because you've got a gun to my head.

In effect, over the past 20 years, the Code has said: Our comics are acceptable. This implies that the other comics are not. Voluntary becomes a semantic thing. Is this a free country? Well, yeah, I think it's a free country, but we've got guys tapping my wires and rifling my psychiatric files. How free is the country?

The wholesalers have been brainwashed to accept only the Code approved comics as good and good for business. After 20 years of this, a lot believe this, and a lot of the public believes it, and a lot of the P.T.A.s believe it. You tell a lie long enough and the legend becomes fact. □

Next issue, INSIDE COMICS brings you PART II of THE COMICS CODE. Featured are in-depth discussions about the origins of the CODE with psychiatrist Dr. Frederic Wertham and writer-editor Jerry DeFuccio. Two men who sat on opposite sides of the fence when the CODE was formed. Dr. Wertham's famous study, SEDUCTION OF THE INNOCENT, served as ammunition for the anti-comics crusade of the 1950's. His recent research includes a study of fan publications titled THE WORLD OF FANZINES. A man often hated, but never ignored. Jerry DeFuccio, former staffer for E.C. COMICS, now associate editor of MAD MAGAZINE, offers his recollection of the last days of E.C. and the beginnings of the CODE.

THE COMIC CONSUMER

Edited by Henry Anton

JUST PUBLISHED

We don't necessarily recommend these new items, we're just noting their publication

LEAN YEARS, an underground edited by Barry Siegel and Bruce Simon, the same pair who produced **SAVAGE HUMOR**. Includes work by Kim Deitch, John Pound, Trina, Chris Warner and Leslie. Thirty-two pages, 50¢ (plus 15¢ postage) from: Cartoonist Co-op, P.O. Box 40474, San Francisco, Cal. 94110

PORK, a **SNATCH**-sized black and white underground completely by S. Clay Wilson. Thirty-two pages, 75¢ (plus 15¢ postage) from: Cartoonist Co-op

GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE #16 has just been published as we go to press. We have no specifics on contents or price, but this is a must-have item. Spicer's work is so good, we urge purchase sight-unseen. From: Bill Spicer, 329 North Avenue 66, Los Angeles, Cal 90042

STAR*REACH, an underground of sorts from former National and Marvel writer Mike Friedrich Includes work by Howie Chaykin and Jim Starlin. This comes with the highest of recommendations One dollar from: **STAR*REACH** 25325 Windfeldt Rd., Hayward, Ca. 94541.

GUILTY, GUILTY, GUILTY! is the newest Garry Trudeau **DOONESBURY** book and comes highly recommended. Trudeau's draftsmanship is actually improving, and this collection contains many of the controversial strips mentioned in this issue. Fantastically funny. Paperback, $1.95 in most bookstores

CUMULATIVE PAPERBACK INDEX, 1939-1959, which provides a guide to the earliest mass-marketed paperbacks. The index gives details on nearly 14 000 pocket-sized paperback books published under 89 imprints by 33 U S publishers. Priced at $24, the 362-page book is edited by Robert Reginald and available from: Gale Research Company, Book Tower, Detroit, Michigan 48226 □

SUPPORTING A GENIUS

Kenneth Smith is, quite frankly, a genius. Without a doubt, he's the best artist in and around fandom And because he refuses to prostitute himself commercially, his project, **PHANTASMAGORIA**, always seems on the verge of collapse

By trade, Mr. Smith is a college professor who wields a rather mean artistic pen. After doing outstanding paperback and comic book covers—and a myriad of fanzine work—Smith refused to do any additional work. The reason? He felt the work was being massacred by poor production, uncaring printers, poor standards of quality and a dozen other varied reasons

He later began producing his own magazine, **PHANTASMAGORIA**, wherein he exerted total control over writing, drawing editing, producing and financing Three issues have been produced

to date, all of which have received the highest acclaim possible.

But due to some of the perversities of comic and science fiction fandom, the ever-soaring prices of paper and printing, and even Smith's sometimes quixotic visions of quality, the magazine is on the verge of bankruptcy, thus endangering the publication of the fourth and future issues

Frankly, we'd wish all of the readers would simply take our word for it and write a check for $18—$15 to cover the purchase of the first three issues and $3 for a pre-publication copy of issue four—but why not send Smith 50¢ for his exquisitely beautiful catalogue of available items? Not only will the catalogue be a work of art in itself, it will preview all of Smith's in-print efforts and offer discounts on the products.

We simply can't urge you enough to support Smith's efforts His mailing address is: Box 20020-A, L.S.U. Station, Baton Rouge, La. 70803. Financing **PHANTASMAGORIA** should rightfully make you feel like a patron of the arts. □

PEDIGREE PUBLISHERS

It's not hard to take often well-deserved swipes at publishers for their crass, unfeeling manipulating of material, people and prices What with spiraling prices and run-away production, more and more of the entrepreneurs seem willing to rip-off the consumer at their first opportunity.

All is not lost, however, as there still are several respectable, but often unmentioned, publishing houses that produce excellent comic art material

Foremost among them is probably Dover Publications, Inc. of New York. They specialize in high quality paperbacks which are both durable and inexpensive. We recommend their items highly Among their comic titles still in

print are: **BARNABY** ($1 50, 138 pages), which is a complete, unabridged reproduction of Crockett Johnson's 1943 classic; Milt Gross **HE DONE HER WRONG** ($2.50, 246 pages), a reprint of the 1930 comic milestone billed as "the great American novel and not a word in it—no music, too"; Winsor McCay's **DREAMS OF THE RAREBIT FIEND** ($2 00, 62 pages), an unabridged reprint of the 1905 anthology; and other titles like **NIZE BABY** (by Milt Gross), two Heinrich Kley collections and other books

Dover publishes hundreds of fine, low-priced art books every year, but a compendium of comic art works available can be gotten by writing: Dover Publications, Dept. Hum, 180 Varick Street, New York, N Y. 10014. Ask for their humor catalogue.

Sheed and Ward is a trade book specialist which has recently hit with Gary Trudeau's and Nick Von Hoffman's **THE FIRESIDE WATERGATE**. However, less known are their three collections of Tom Wilson's **ZIGGY** comic strips, one of which is a coloring book. They also publish **DOONESBURY: THE ORIGINAL YALE CARTOONS**, which is a collection of Trudeau's pre-syndicated material. Also in the line are two books for "now children"; **JOANIE**, which features Joanie Caucus from **DOONESBURY**; and **WHAT IS GOD'S AREA CODE?** featuring characters from Jack Moore's **KELLY** strip. There's more, too, and a catalogue can be obtained by writing to: Sheed and Ward, Inc., Subsidiary of Universal Press Syndicate, 475 Fifth Avenue New York, N Y 10017. □

PROMISED GOODIES

ARTSY FARTSY FUNNIES, by Patrick Rosenkrantz and Hugo Van Baren, an 80-page book published in Holland Retailing at $3.95 from the U S. Distributor, Print Mint, the book will contain an underground history, index and bibliography and photos and bios of artists. No publication date announced

PROMETHEAN #5 may be ready as you read this. This issue of this stellar fan magazine will contain an extensive interview with Robert Crumb and many exclusive photographs, and work by Moscoso, Metzger and Robert Williams. The price is $1.50 from: Bud Plant, 458 Harmony Lane, San Jose, California 95111

WORLD ENCYCLOPEDIA OF COMIC ART, edited by Maurice Horn, is scheduled for publication in the Fall, 1975. The book will contain 1200 cross-referenced entries of the most important artists, writers and characters from international comic art. Bill Blackbeard (American comic strips), Joe Brancatelli (American comic books) and several others have already signed on as major contributors The tome will cost about $23 and will be published by Chelsea House—mainly for use in libraries and by researchers.

THE SF INDEX, a "major comprehensive bibliography of science fiction and fantasy books," to be published in 1975 by Gale Research Company. Edited by R. Reginald, the book will attempt to list "all English-language first editions, together with any subsequent title changes." Douglas Menville has been appointed associate editor and Barry Levin and Michael Part will also contribute. Further information from: Hill House, 379 Edgerton Drive, San Bernardino Ca 92405

THE YOUNG LUST READER, an anthology of the best **YOUNG LUST** material, edited by Bill Griffith and Jay Kinney. Old material will be whipped into a history and new material added to the 128-page paperback. No publication date was announced

THE RAY BRADBURY COMPANION will be published in October, 1974 by Gale Research Company under the Brucoli-Clark label. Edited by Hollywood screenwriter William F. Nolan, the book is said to be "auto-biographical as well as bio-bibliograph cal." Bradbury has written a lengthy forward "The Inherited Wish," especially for the book It will retail at $28 50 (complete with slipcase) and will carry a checklist section covering Bradbury's fiction, articles and miscellaneous other works. Order from: Gale Research, Book Tower, Detroit, Michigan 48226. □

BRIEFLY NOTED

—Leonard Darvin, administrator of the Comics Code, again lashed out at underground comix during the April 25th Comics panel of the ACIDA convent on. Speaking to an audience of comic book publishers, national distributors and magazine wholesalers at the New York Hilton, Darvin said: "The Code Seal is doubly important as a

certain means of distinguishing a legitimate comic from an 'underground' comic." He said dealers are bound by Supreme Court rulings on obscenity and could be "convicted and jailed" for selling underground comix.

—Starting with the 61st issue of Alan Light's **BUYER'S GUIDE**, former **SHAZAM!** artist C.C. Beck has begun a monthly column on comics. there are sure to be biting comments, sardonic remarks, and a horde of hard-won insights into comic book publishing. A one-year subscription to **THE BUYER'S GUIDE** is $3.00 from: DynaPubs, R.R. 1, Box 297, East Moline, Illinois 61244

—Simon and Schuster, who has probably published more comic art works than all the other book publishers combined, has merged three out-of-print **POGO** paperbacks into **WALT KELLY'S POGO REVISITED.** The omnibus contains **INSTANT POGO, THE JACK ACID SOCIETY BLACK BOOK** and **THE POGO POOP BOOK.** Walt Kelly was a genius, and should you not have these titles in your collection, this $3.95, 320-page compendium should be on the top of your already-overburdened shopping list.

—There have been all kinds of gimmicks dealers want to sell to collectors, but one of the most practical we've seen is Grant Boyd's "Collector Cards." Each 3-inch by 5-inch card catalogues 100 issues of a comic book. Prices are low and service is good. For further information, contact: Grant Boyd, 4724 East La Salle Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85040. □

PRESS CLIPS

CHANGES for June, 1974 (no. 88) carried a short, superficial interview with artist-cum-musician Robert Crumb. There's a three-color Crumb cover, some interior illustrations and a fine photograph of the usually unphotographable Crumb. Crumb's new high media visibility is due to the introduction of his band's new album, "Cheap-Suit Serenades." Also in this issue is Will Eisner's review of Mark James Estran's **HISTORY OF UNDERGROUND COMIX.** Back issues from: P.O. Box 631, Cooper Sta., New York, New York 10003

New York's **DAILY NEWS** for May 7, 1974 also ran an article on Crumb's band. He was quoted by Ernest Leogrande as saying "Bars are too noisy. They're not intimate enough. I like to play at picnics and weddings." Back issues from: 220 E. 42nd Street, New York, N.Y.

SMASH, a forthcoming new publication being funded by the XEROX CORPORATION, is preparing to run an interview with Stan Lee and Roy Thomas in its maiden issue. They also have plans to publish a number of postage stamp size reproductions of comicbook covers within future issues. It seems likely that every issue of **SMASH** will feature some comic related story and as such would be well worth having. The only problem is the fact that it isn't available either by subscription or

through newsstands. Andy Gutelle, editor of **SMASH**, explains that since the mag is published solely as educational material for the school systems it can't be had except by kids between 9-14 who attend school. He also explained that XEROX is unwilling to fulfill mail order requests for the magazine. So, unless you know a school going kid, or attend school yourself, you'll not find hide nor hair of a copy

THE BERKELEY BARB for May 17, 1974 (no. 456) ran an article on underground cartoons by Clay Geerdes. **THE BERKELEY BARB** for May 24, 1974 (no. 457) ran an article on Vaughn Bode. Back issues from: the **BARB**, Berkeley, California. □

NCS SALE

Perhaps one of the finest publications about the comic art field—and paradoxically one of the least read and least publicized—is **THE CARTOONIST**, the yearly magazine published by the National Cartoonist Society (NCS).

The magazine, issued in conjunction with the annual Reuben Awards Dinner in April, is full of art by many of the world's top cartoonists. There are also pages of articles, photographs and features. Even the ads are interesting

The NCS is now making a limited supply of nine different editions of **THE CARTOONIST** available at $2.50 per copy. **THE CARTOONIST** for 1965, 1966, and 1968-1974 are presently in print; a tenth issue of the magazine, the "Special Sports" number, can be purchased for $3.00

But perhaps even more impressive—and now available to the general public—is the revised edition of the **NCS ALBUM.** Compiled by Mort Walker, who writes and draws **BEETLE BAILEY** and **BONER'S ARK**, the book contains 187 indexed pages, 374 autobiographies of comic artists and writers, along with pictures and art samples. The **ALBUM** also includes a compilation of past NCS award winners and a history of the Society. At $10, this paperback is a must in the collection of every comic fan.

As a special bonus to any fan spending $10 or more, the NCS will include **MAC MILLER'S MAGNIFICENT MONSTER**, a one-foot by five-foot poster with the self-caricatures of almost 400 of the world's most renowned artists

To purchase any of the items, mail your check and order to Marge Devine, National Cartoonist Society, 9 Ebony Court, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11229

SIGN OF THE TIMES?

E.J. Korvette's, the department store chain, recently has a sale on the Mego super-hero and super-villain dolls

All of the heroes—including Batman, Captain America, Captain Marvel and Superman—were being sold for $1.99 each

On the other hand, the super-villains—Mr. Mxyzptlk, the Joker, the Riddler and the Penguin—were being offered at $2.29 each.

What was that about good always triumphing over evil? □

FELINE FILM FLAM

Last and certainly least, for all you consumer-conscious animation lovers, the new Fritz flick, **THE NINE LIVES OF FRITZ THE CAT** is nine lives too many. It stinks

BARGAIN HUNTING

Since we mentioned Publishers Central Bureau (PCB) last issue, they've released a new catalogue with additional comic material at reduced prices. Among the bargains this time around is Watson-Guptil's **TARZAN OF THE APES**, retailing at only $5.98. As you might remember, this is the Burne Hogarth full-color retelling of the Tarzan legend originally published at $12.50. Their number is 139464. Also on the list is a soft-bound edition of **THE MAXFIELD PARRISH POSTER BOOK**, which originally sold for $9.95 but is now selling at $5.95. Twenty-four posters are reproduced in full color and PCB's number is 514028. And does anyone remember that 1972 bomb, **GREAT COMICS OF THE NEW YORK DAILY NEWS AND THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE?** Overpriced at $12.50, it's a decent value at PCB's $5.98 asking price (no. 501457). □

CONVENTION CALENDAR:

Monthly gatherings:

New York City: COMIC BOOK MARKETPLACE, usually second or third Sundays. Information from: Phil Seuling, P.O. Box 177, Coney Island Station, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11224

Newton, Mass.: Usually third Sunday. Information from: Larry Larrabee, (617) 899-3172

Silver Spring, Md.: FUNNY-BOOK FESTIVAL, usually one a month. Information from: Touch of Strange Bookshop, 328 University Blvd. E., Silver Springs, Md.

Boston, Mass., usually first Sunday. Information from: YMCA, Huntington Ave., Boston, Mass.

Hollywood, Ca.: FIRST SUNDAY CLUB, first Sunday. Information from: Greg Kojdoulian, 635 N. Citrus Ave., Hollywood, Ca. 90036

Hollywood, Ca.: SUPER SUNDAY, once a month. Information from: American Comic Book Company, P.O. Box 2921, Hollywood, Ca. 90028

Fairfax, Va.: once a month. Information from: Town Hall, 3396 University Dr., Fairfax, Va.

Boston, Mass.: COMIC BOOK COLLECTOR'S MARKET, fourth Sunday. Information: (617) 583-6777

Monthly gatherings:

Cleveland, O.: SUPER SUNDAY July 14 and August 18. Information from: Vladimir Swirynski, (216) 961-0451.

Detroit, Mich.: COMIC COLLECTOR'S CONVENTION, usually last Sunday of the month. Information from: Chris, (313) 532-3245 or (313) 274-8843

Other conventions:

San Diego, Ca.: SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON, July 31-August 5. Information from: San Diego Comic-Con, P.O. Box 17066, San Diego, Ca. 92117

London, England: COMIC MART, July 20, July 21, October 5, December 14. Information from: Nick Landau, 10 Ladbroke Walk, London W11 3PW, England

Detroit, Mich.: STAR-CON 2 (Star Trek convention), July 19-July 21. Information from Star-Con 2, P.O. Box 68, Detroit, Michigan 48223

Dayton, O., PULP-CON 3 (pulp magazine convention), July 27-July 28. Information from: Rusty Hevelin, P.O. Box 434, Dayton, Ohio 45401.

Atlanta, Ga.: AGACON 74, THE DEEP SOUTH S-F CONFERENCE, August 23-August 25. Information from: Agacon '74, Box 11023, Atlanta, Ga. 30310

Chicago, Ill.: NOSTALGIA 74, August 9-11. Information from: Nancy Warner, 10 S. 540 Country Line Road, Hinsdale, Illinois 60521

Basel, Switzerland: EUROPEAN COMIC CONVENTION, November 15. Information from: Reinhard Mordel, 7 W. 14th Street, New York, N.Y. 10011. □

GEORGE

STATEMENT OF INTENT:

GEORGE will endeavor to review every available fanzine. It restricts itself to reviews of limited edition magazines —items not usually available on newsstands. **GEORGE** will **NOT** review underground comix, black and white comic magazines or color comics issued by the professional comic book companies.

GEORGE operates totally independent of **INSIDE COMICS.** The opinions expressed by **GEORGE** do not necessarily reflect the viewpoints or opinions of the editors, publishers or staff of **INSIDE COMICS. GEORGE**'s opinions are their own; they owe no allegiance to and are not edited or censored by the staff of **INSIDE COMICS.**

TO GET YOUR PRODUCT REVIEWED BY GEORGE:

Simply send a copy of your fanzine to **GEORGE** at the following address: **INSIDE COMICS,** Attn.: **GEORGE,** 11 West 17 Street, New York, N.Y. 10011.

If the fanzine's policy is not to issue review copies, please contact **GEORGE** at the above address with the following information: title of item, price and address where a copy can be purchased.

GEORGE greatly appreciates review copies of items it will consider. However, complimentary review copies and copies purchased by **GEORGE** are treated equally, without favoritism. In most cases, the reviewer will not be aware of whether the fanzine has been purchased or if it was sent without charge.

THE GEORGE STAFF:

GEORGE's staff is comprised of four reviewers: Ron Harris, Bob Napier, Art Scott and Jim Vadeboncoeur. All reviews are initialed by the writer at the end of the copy.

HOW GEORGE REVIEWS:

For simplicity's sake, all fanzines reviewed are assumed to be 8½" by 11" in size, printed photo-offset or offset, bound by saddle-stitch technique and mailed flat in an envelope. All variations from this "standard" will be noted within the review.

Preceding each review will be a boldfaced legend of information; each legend gives the **FANZINE TITLE** and **NUMBER**; single copy price (subscription rates, if available); page count (interior pages only except where indicated); size (if different from "standard"); frequency (if stated); editor (if known); usage of color; ordering information; general description.

All fanzines are grouped into three broad categories: general interest fanzines, newspaper strip fanzine newspapers, and reprint fanzines.

A FINAL CAVEAT

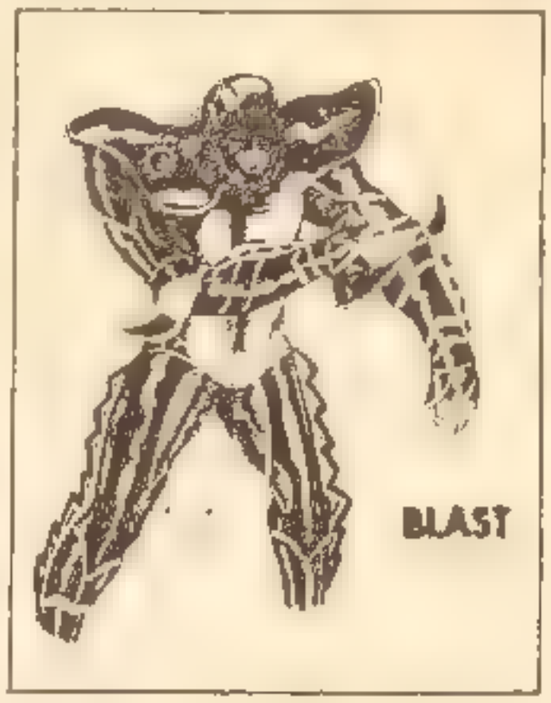
Due to the tremendous amount of comic fanzines published each month—and the limited space available—**GEORGE** can **ONLY** review comic fanzines. **GEORGE** regrets it cannot review science fiction, movie or other fan magazines.

GENERAL INTEREST FANZINES

BLAST #8; 30¢ (75¢ for 3 issues); 14 pages total; Harland Ronning, editor; order from: Harland Ronning / 606 Ave H. South / Saskatoo, Sask., CANADA S7M 1W9; General interest fanzine.

After having published seven issues of a fanzine, one would expect an editor to have a better grasp on the editorial reins than Mr. Ronning displays. Despite the low 30¢ price tag, **BLAST** leaves me cold. While claiming to be a "Nostalgia Fanzine," it's broken up into so many varied articles on so many non-related topics that one feels there isn't enough of anything here to hold one's interest.

For example: There's a reprint of a 1921 New York Times review of "The Cabinet Of Doctor Caligari" accompanied by some childish illustrations (by Draper); reviews of two fanzines which are both almost a year old; A "Charlie Chan Movieography" by Mark Richards, in which he lists the titles and short plot outlines of some 37 Charlie Chan movies from 1931 to 1949; an almost funny article called "How To Get Into Fandom" by Tom Durham which, I think, was supposed to be all in jest but turned out to be all in vain; a short "review" of a three year old book on Orson Welles' "War of The Worlds" radio broadcast and a hopelessly amateurish one-page strip by Ronning.



Other features include a full-page drawing by Draper, a sad cover by Wexley and two separate editorials. The magazine is side-stapled and mailed without an envelope. For a first offset issue, one would expect a better thought out product. —J.V.

BULLDOG #4; 30¢ ($1 for 4 issues); 16 pages total; Steve Kristiansen, editor; order from Steve Kristiansen / 6216 185th Pl. S.W. / Lynnwood, Wash. 98036; newspaper comic strip fanzine.

Not having to protect any "precious" art, **BULLDOG** comes to you folded in half and stapled together. Upon removing the mailing staple and unfolding the magazine, one is greeted by the only piece of art in the issue, a drawing of Prince Valiant by Hal Foster and a single staple in the upper left corner. So much for the physics and the art content.

The main text feature is an article on strip artist Kreigh Collins by Carl Horak who reminisces about Collins' work in the papers from when Carl was a young boy to when Mr. Collins retired in 1972. An interesting piece of journalism.

Other articles include: "The Analects Of Big Stoop"—being a column of general foxlore and facts about newspaper strips by M. Scott Barson, "Syndicate Teletype," an article dealing with methods of storing daily and Sunday comic strips and other topics of interest to strip collectors, "The Bulldog Comic Strip Price Guide," which is Sean Warren's unsolicited opinion of the values of what he considers the top ten most wanted strips and a "Question Corner" designed to gather information rather than distribute it. If you are into collecting comic strips from your local paper there may be some material of interest in these articles for you.

The rest of the issue is devoted to an editorial, some letters from readers, six pages of ads for comic strips and a "Bulldog Information Page" which tells the cost of advertising in, or subscribing to, **BULLDOG.** —J.V.

BULLDOG #5; 30¢ or 4 for $1; 26 pages total; stapled in one corner; mimeo; issued bi-monthly; Steve Kristiansen, editor; order from Steve Kristiansen / 6216 185th Pl. S.W. / Lynnwood, Washington 98036; comic strip fanzine-adzine.

While comic book fans will get little out of **BULLDOG**, comic strip fans will probably go for this half-and-half article/advertising zine. The theme of the issue is Milt Caniff's famous **STEVE CANYON.** Well-known caniffophile Shel Dorf contributes a short appreciation and history of the strip. Carl Horak details Steve's first seven adventures with special attention to introductions and histories of continuing characters.

Backfeatures include four news-and-opinion columns, letters, and an attempt to serialize an Overstreet-style price guide for comic strips. Filling out (and supporting) the issue are several pages of ads for Sunday and daily strips of all kinds.

BULLDOG's columns and articles are brief but interesting, particularly to novice strip fanciers who haven't heard any of this before. Ad rates seem reasonable, too (classifieds start at 20¢ and pages about $5). Strippers might find this a good way to reach kindred souls without having to pay extra to advertise to a multitude of disinterested comic book fans as well. —R.H.

COMICART NEWS AND REVIEWS #17; 15¢ ($2 for 12 issues); eight pages total; monthly; John Baige, editor; order from: John Baige / 28 Admiral Rd. / Kitchener, Ont., Canada; article fanzine.

This is a very impressive little magazine. The typical article fanzine tries to cram too many short articles and columns into a small package, **CANAR** would rather do only a couple and do them well. This issue features an eye-opening interview with Barry Smith who has a great deal to say about Conan, Marvel, Stan Lee and the comics business, much of it highly critical, all of it well-said. The other main feature, by Stan Molson, is the first in a series devoted to alerting fans to the comics in the under-appreciated Gold Key line. There's also a letters page; the front cover is by Val Mayerik; and there's a collection of scribby little cartoons on the back cover credited to Russ Heath (the Russ Heath? If so, they're the

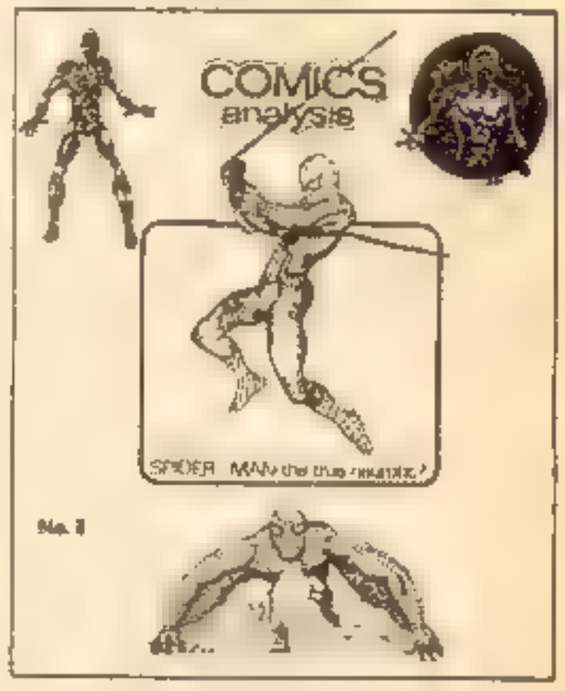
strangest things by him ever to see print!). The text is typeset, the layout is pleasing and the price is incredibly low. Highly recommended. —A.S.

COMIC MEDIA NEWS Nos. 9, 10, 11 and 12, 12p each (4 for 55p); 12 pages total each; monthly; Richard Burton, editor; two-color covers on Nos. 10, 11 and 12, order from: Richard Burton / 22 Woodham / Egham, Surry TW20 9AP / England; newszine.

Quite simply, this is the English version of **THE COMIC READER.** The news is reprinted from **TCR** (with permission, by the way) with about a page of British happenings and some American miscellany tossed in for good measure. It should be a very valuable publication for our English cousins but anyone on this side of the pond who's interested in the contents may as well consult an American newszine.

Incidentally, the exchange rate for British pence to American cents should make the price of this about 30¢ per issue. But don't take my word for it; call a bank or American Express to be certain. The English economy is doing funny things these days. —B.N.

COMICS ANALYSIS #3; 75¢; 30 pages; 5½x8½; Mike Cruden, editor; order from Mike Cruden / 8 Swinbourne Gr. / Withington / Manchester 20 / England; British discussion zine.



Except for a number of mediocre spot illustrations, this imported fanzine consists of articles, opinion columns, and letters about everything from Spider-Man's virility to Spanish comedy-adventure strips. The resulting mishmash is eminently readable.

Discussion and opinion-swapping are what make **COMICS ANALYSIS.** The lengthy, argumentative letters section is one of the magazine's most worthwhile features. Rather than stick to critiques of previous issues, the writers take the opportunity to orate on every aspect of comics both British and American. One feels, however, that the editor takes unfair advantage of his position by constantly inserting his own rebuttals into the middle of letters, knowing the writers can't fight back.

Most interesting of all is "Discussion in Darlington." This isn't an article at all, but the transcription of a round-table chat by four British comics fans. The talk wanders, as conversations tend to, from subject to subject, bringing up names and events which mean nothing to many readers. But sandwiched in between are interesting tidbits of information, plenty of opinions with which to agree or disagree, and an informal manner many a pre-planned article sorely lacks.

A refreshingly unassuming magazine, **COMICS ANALYSIS** provides plenty of reading for your seventy-five cents. After reading it, you may just feel like completing the circle of communication by writing your own letter of comment. —R.H.

COMIX WORLD #1-11; subs only ($1.25 for six issues, $2.50 for 12 issues, $1 for set of back issues); two pages each; monthly; Clay Geerdes, editor; order from Clay Geerdes / 915 Indian Rock Rd. / Berkeley, Ca. 94707; underground comix newsletter.

Clay Geerdes is a student and chronicler of the underground comix scene, in close personal touch with the artists and publishers. Under the same **COMIX WORLD** banner he does a news and review column on the comix in several large-circulation fanzines and counter-culture tabloids. This two page info sheet provides the latest news (and gossip) to subscribers on a monthly schedule, in classic three-dot journalistic fashion (sans dots) he gives the scoop on what undergrounds are out, in the works, and what the artists are up to. Where space permits he includes snippets of art and artist profiles.

If there's a flaw in **COMIX WORLD**, it's that Geerdes is too close to the Bay Area underground scene (which he views as the underground, period). While he regularly complains about the "Eastern Comics Establishment," he never seems to criticize any of the artists or publishers in his local circle. Either he's afraid of alienating his friends and sources, or he suffers from a sort of tunnel vision in which he views the

underground as a shining knight brotherhood of creative artists above reproach (which is what I suspect). This does not make for good reporting. Still, he's got the hot news, and fans of the comix will find his newsletter invaluable. —A.S

CPL (Contemporary Pictorial Literature) #8; 50¢; 38 pages; 5½x8½; Robert Layton, editor; order from CPL/Gang Publications / 4010 Mallway Drive Apt A / Indianapolis, Indiana 46236; mailed without envelope; general interest fanzine

Another issue of **CPL** rolls off the presses—and right on schedule, too. **CPL** has always striven hard to project the 'good old fanzine" image. Save for its untypical regularity of publication, it succeeds.

This issue is the "good old fanzine" conglomeration of comics articles, fan opinions, stories, jokes and spot art. Paty Greer discusses the portrayal of women in comics, C.C. Beck advances his philosophy of comics as escapist literature; Ron Fortier says a few good words about Charlton and Nick Cuti. Tony Isabella winds up a serialized Norse Gods story; and Mike Usan spouts some nonsense about how fandom can singlehandedly control the destiny of the comics industry. And so on. Good articles and bad; flashes of insight and flashes of idiocy; funny spots and boring spots. The good old fanzine.

If only the thing weren't so damned cliquish! That's the real trouble with **CPL**. Most of the artists -- hell, practically the entire staff—are members or hangers-on to the Dan Adkins Gang of Fans-Turned-Pros, and their feeling of pride and loyalty is ferocious. It's just too hard for them to resist the temptation to say, "Hey, guys, we're not just ordinary fans! We're in with the **PROS** and we're better than you!" This undercurrent of snootiness threatens to destroy the whole "good old fanzine" image of **CPL**, and it's a shame.

Meanwhile, **CPL** does offer a sprinkling of good art (John Byrne, Craig Russell, Duffy Vohland), some interesting reading, an attractive layout, and a reasonable price. What's more, the response to mail orders is admirably quick. For all its faults, **CPL** is still a good buy. —R.H.

DYNAMITE #1, #2, and #3; 15¢, 15¢, 25¢; 20, 30, 26 pages; side-stapled; ditto with offset cover; Steven Mark Shipley, editor; order from Steven Mark Shipley / 1580½ Jermain Drive / Toledo, Ohio 43606; stripzine.

It's hard to pinpoint just why this modest ditto zine is appealing. It's certainly nothing spectacular; yet the friendly atmosphere and entertaining contents make for a few pleasant moments of reading.

The first two issues of **DYNAMITE** follow a super hero theme, featuring The Green Man, another tortured hero, and The Agents of Oracle, a Thunder Agents spin-off. The third issue is split between a black magic story and "Me Lug," a one-joke humor strip.

Most of the above is the work of editor Steve Shipley. His drawing is crude but ingratiating. Rather than straight super hero drawing, Shipley uses a cartoony style which could develop into something pretty good. The writing of the strips varies. The superhero and magic strips, by Shipley alone or with other writers, are competent. Unfortunately, when Shipley abandons his straight, cartoon synthesis and goes all out for laughs ("Me Lug") he fails miserably.

DYNAMITE isn't a book for the super-sophisticated comics fan, it doesn't pretend to be. But for a comfortable little dittozine, it's pretty good. This would be a nice place, too, for fans eager to get into the world of writing and drawing for fanzines. The editor continually solicits contributions, and the issues have come out frequently enough that the new contributor won't have to wait forever to see his work in print. —R.H.

ENDEAVOR #6; $1; 90 pages; ditto and blueprint; side stapled; Kurt Erichsen, editor, order from: Kurt Erichsen / 235 Weatherford / Corvallis, Ore. 97332; fan fiction magazine.

Fanzines devoted to amateur fiction have never been numerous and they are usually not very much fun to read. For some reason, it is much more difficult to put up with the inevitable amateurishness in prose style and story concept than to abide the similar shortcomings in stripzines. Perhaps it's just that it takes more time and effort to wade through a page of text than a page of comic art. Happily, this is not true of **ENDEAVOR**. The stories are imaginative, competently written, and not in the standard clichéd ersatz Conan, super hero, or EC snap-ending bags.

Most of the stories qualify as either science fiction or fantasy, but the best piece in the issue, "Ned Duddly Longgone and the Raw Spanish Omelet," is neither. It's a strange, quite funny, bit of slightly surreal humor by editor Erichsen. "The Island of Exiles," by Dale Nelson, in the mythical pre-history fantasy genre, is similarly excellent. Seven other stories, short and long (longer than most magazines will allow, incidentally) fill out the issue along with letters, editorial and the like.

There are quite a few spot illustrations of varying quality, though the magazine could use more to break up the many pages of solid type, and there are also a number of full page drawings printed by a blueprint process, which, though touted as the next best thing to offset, looks rather murky. A ten-page science fiction strip, art by Erichsen, is not bad, but it suffers from gimmicky layout.

There's quite a lot of entertaining reading here for a dollar; fiction fans and amateur writers will find it a good value. —A.S.

FANTASMA COMICS #1; 30¢; 10 pages total; David Levin, editor; order from David Levin / 758 Dearborn St. / Teaneck, N.J. 07666; strip fanzine.

Back in the dear, dead days before comic fandom mushroomed into a big time operation, young fans who produced their own amateur comic strips would pass their drawings among their friends, or via ditto, would circulate them in a small circle of similarly wet-behind-the-ears fan artists. Nowadays, though, with dozens of fanzines coming out every month, there arises an overpowering urge to see the art in print, and so they publish it as a fanzine and advertise it in a large circulation adzine and hope for fame and fortune. This syndrome results in embarrassing publications like this one.

The strip "Next Stop: Earth" by David Levin and Norm Goldstein is flat out terrible, crudely drawn and poorly written. The best adjective to describe **FANTASMA COMICS** is **childish**; not surprising, since Levin and Goldstein are obviously children.

In reviewing amateur publications one automatically makes allowances for youth and non-professionalism, but there is a point beyond which the work is so amateurish that it should not be published at all. This is, regrettably one of those. Perhaps other young strip writers artists at the same level of development will enjoy this fanzine, all others, save your money. —A.S.

FANTASICOMIX #3, $?, 44 pages, Scott Paauw, editor, four-color covers, order from Scott Paauw / 20279 Douglas Court / Birmingham, Mich 48010; general interest fanzine.

FCX, as they call it, holds the distinction of having the smallest print this side of an insurance contract. I mean, GEORGE's print is bigger. What makes this a problem is **FCX** is printed on pebble-grained paper and the type has a hell of a time standing out against the background. Frankly, it's a pain to read.

Stalwartly making the effort, nonetheless, we find Steve Mattingly's "Que Pasa?" column, Joe Wesson's "Fan Philosophy," "Why Conan?" by Bruce Westbrook, "FCX Quiz" by Mike Raub, "Make Mine Marvel" by Gary Getsoff, "Who Could Help But Like Him?" by Mike Main, "Viewpoint: DC" by John Cameron, a letters section and editorial. There are also three strips, a Conan portfolio and a hoard of spot- and full-page illustrations featuring the work of some 30 artists, most of whom are better than average.

Quite a lot of variety, to be sure, but several articles are quite outdated (**FCX** had a long delay due to printing hassles) and the others are mainly sophomoric surface reflections of the subjects at hand.

The strips are worse. With the exception of a two-pager by Mattingly and John Byrne (perhaps the top feature of the fanzine), the strips are overwritten, confusing and clichéd. The art isn't bad but the strips read as oddly from front-to-back as from any other direction.

More's the pity as editor Paauw has evidently worked hard to produce an attractive fanzine. In fact, it is attractive to look at; just murder to read.

Concerning price, there is nothing in the fanzine to indicate what **FCX** costs, nor a hint in the cover letter that accompanied it. I know how much it cost Scott for reshot halftones, printer fiascos, paper price hikes and whatnot but the price of **FCX** isn't to be found or an ad for it at this writing. Interested persons may write the editor for rates. And, oh yeah, write real small. —B.N.

GRAPHIC GALLERY #3; $4 ($9 for two issues, sent airmail); 64 pages; Russ Cochran, editor; order from Russ Cochran / Route One / Adel, Iowa 50003; original art sales catalog.

GRAPHIC GALLERY is a merchandising tool for those dealers who specialize in original comic art. The pieces for sale are beautifully reproduced in this slick volume, with prices or minimum bids specified. By the time you read this review, items in #3 will be long gone, but it's worth having anyway, for it represents a handsome collection of artwork: daily strips, Sunday strips, comic book pages, and some unique items like the Car Barks oil paintings that one cannot see elsewhere (alas, they're in black and white). The Big Names are well represented. Foster, Raymond, Caniff, Frazetta, Adams, Herriman, Hogarth, Capp, etc.

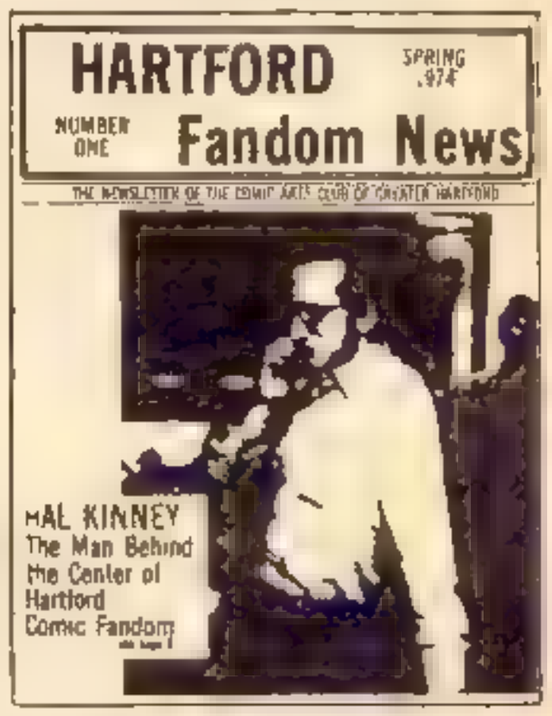
If you want to join in on the buying action subscribe, but be armed with a fat wallet! Only a few daily strips and recent comic pages go for less than $50, Sunday pages by the Masters go for several hundred, and things like Frazetta oils are into four figures. Since I'm never going to get rich writing reviews for **GEORGE**, I'll have to be satisfied with the reproductions in **GRAPHIC GALLERY**. You too, probably. —A.S.

HARTFORD FANDOM NEWS #1; 25¢, 8 pages total; John A. Mozzer, editor; order from John A. Mozzer / 83 Trinity Ave. / Glastonbury, Conn. 06033; local newszine.

From December 15, 1814 to January 5, 1815, the New England members of the Federalist Party met in Hartford, Conn. to voice opposition to the War of 1812 and drafted a resolution which stated, among other things, that they had the right to secede from the Union. But within a few weeks the news of Jackson's victory at New Orleans and the Treaty of Ghent ending the war arrived, thus nipping any ideas of secession in the bud and ending the power of the Federalist Party in national politics for good.

There hasn't been a peep from Hartford since.

But now, what with the right of peaceable assembly, the right to bear armloads of comics and no laws abridging the freedom of the press, there's a newszine circulating aimed at fans of the greater Hartford area.


HARTFORD
SPRING '74
NUMBER ONE
Fandom News
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE COMIC ARTS CLUB OF GREATER HARTFORD
HAL KINNEY
The Man Behind the Center of Hartford Comic Fandom

The contents are mainly an interview with local musician and EC collector Steve Starger, who talked more about music than anything, and there's a profile on good old Hal Kinney, the proprietor of a Hartford comic shop.

To be honest, fans in, say, Denver won't find much here of relative value. But if you live in or around Hartford—well, here's a hot one for you. —B.N.

IOTA #2; 35¢; 20 pages total, mimeograph and offset (six pages), side stapled; Greg Puryear editor; order from Greg Puryear / 7000 Knightswood Dr. / Charlotte, N.C. 28211; comics fanzine

This enjoyable little zine seems to be progressing nicely, the staff has increased from one to three, and some offset pages have been added. As with the first issue, the editor's thoughtful, concise and well written reviews of current comics and fanzines are the best feature. Such reviews have been a staple of fan publications for some time now, and they're usually routine, boring and unpolished; it's a pleasure to find such good ones in a modest publication like this one. Puryear also reports on a talk by Leonard Nimoy and includes a biographical sketch; well done, but probably nothing new to **STAR TREK** fans.

Thomas O'Reilly contributes mildly diverting reflections on Captain Marvel and Superman, and four bland superhero illustrations, obviously swiped, that hardly seem worth the cost of the offset printing. Tommy Addis does a fair cover and inside drawing, along with a short text feature. **IOTA** continues to prove that infancy fledgeling fanzines can be well put together and entertaining. —A.S.

MEDIASCENE #8; 75¢ ,$4 for 8 issues 24 pages total; 11"x17"; bi-monthly; Jim Steranko, editor; two-color covers and centerspread; order from Supergraphics / PO Box 445 / Wyomissing, Pa 19610; newszine

This is the "Big Pin-Up issue" of MEDIASCENE(formerly COMIXSCENE, as you are undoubtedly aware) and to that rounded end there are two pages of pin-ups from the general media (Gibson girls, Harlow, 1920's cheesecake magazines, Bardot, Grable Monroe, etc), a page of comic femmes (Miss Lace, Torchy, Barbara a and Katy Keene, to name a few) and the centerspread is a Steranko tribute to eading blonde bombshell Marilyn Monroe, which perhaps captures every facial express on she made during her suicide. The reproduction is pretty muddy on some of the pin-ups but most are quite servicable, including the Steranko cover illustration.

The rest of the issue is news, ranging from comics to movies to science fiction and fantasy to crime/detective paperbacks to books. The layouts and organization are excellent, there's a healthy dose of cover reproductions from comics and paperbacks and the writing is free and easy throughout.

While some comic fans may feel that Steranko is given them the short end of the stick by incorporating other mediums into his journal, I feel it's a sensible and healthy move. It allows a forum for exchange of ideas between various fandoms, it could generate fans to enlarge their range of interests and it provides multi-faceted fans a centralized publication from which they can gather news without seeking several specialized sources. —B N

MORPHEUS #1; $1.00; 36 pages; Dave Mruz, editor; order from: the MCFA / 3112 Holmes Ave. South / Minneapolis, Minn. 55413; general interest fanzine

This is a fairly good first issue fanzine with an even balance of strips, illustrations and text.

The strips are the best part, highlighted by Charles Cameron's wordless and moody "Tales of the Happy Hookah," two short but brilliant mime pieces by an anonymous artist and a rough but visually effective western 11-pager of the Sergio Leone school by writer Tim Conner and artist Richard Larson.

The single illustrations split between fair and klunky with Larson, Jim Coplin and Steve Mason handling a majority of the chores.

The text is all short stories. In fact, the first one is called 'Short Story' and is an attempt at buttonholing the reader into being a part of the action, scripted by Joe Thingvall. L. Becker offers "The Boy and the Toadstools," a typical timid-kid-gets-back-at-bully bit. Tim Conner is back with "Medium of Exchange." Tim tries hard to set a sinister mood but ends up with pages and pages of things like, "You lunge on limbs steadied by hate a moist feeling his throat crumbling in your crushing grasp. But your limbs give out and you fall, cursing fate for its cruelty. Your face is cool against the rain-washed alley. You lie there for a moment or an eternity; not wanting to move, not marking time. The man ... the man! Murderer! You scramble to your feet, your body shaking, your mind burning.

After five pages of this not only is my mind burning but my eyes hurt and there's some discomfort in my large intestine.

But on the whole MORPHEUS is a reasonably nice premier fanzine.—B.N.

MYSTERIOUS ADVENTURES #1; 50¢; 64 pages total; ditto, offset cover; side stapled; mailed without envelope. Larry Johnson, editor; order from: Larry Johnson / 69 Bath St. / Ballston Spa, N.Y. 12020; comics fanzine

This is an unpretentious, wee-produced ditto fanzine featuring a standard mix of strips, articles and short fiction. Editor Johnson does the two strips (comedy science fiction and a female Dr. Strange) in an ingratiating cartoon style. The fiction is ordinary fare, though a crime-fighter serial by Jack Monninger, Jr. is remarkable for its disjointed non-sentences and bizarre use of caps. There's the inevitable recent comics review column, the first part of a story-by-story rehash of Ray Bradbury's fiction that will go on forever, and a two page review of a Tommy Dorsey record (Wha?). There's nothing extraordinary here, but MA's OK; it shows a lot of effort and some promise. —A.S

OMNIWAVE #4; 30¢; 12 pages; Brian Nelson and Nathan Rosen, editors, order from COMMA / 10822 Hob Nail Ct. / Potomac, Md 20854; mailed without envelope; general interest fanzine

Even on the third reading, it's difficult to come up with a justification for OMNIWAVE—unless it's simple self-indulgence on the part of the editors. The slim zine touches on several areas, with a bias toward sword-and-fantasy. The four articles about the genre aren't much, though. One a list of s&f books in preparation, is fair, if pretty dry. The others—concerning Edgar Rice Burroughs, the John Norman Gor books, and "all about the pulps"—are sketchy, empty, and stale.

OMNIWAVE's non-sword-and-fantasy fare is worse. A couple columns with titles like "My Page" are pointless nonsense dashed out by typewriter-happy writers. Fiction offerings are a super-short science-fiction snap-ender and the third chapter (all of 1½ columns long) of a science fiction tale with neither synopsis nor purpose.

Not even the magazine's appearance is very good. Titles are crudely hand-lettered without benefit of guidelines and text is typed on one of those unreadable fake-handwriting typewriters.

These days 30¢ is an average price for 12 offset pages, but there's simply nothing on these twelve worth buying. Get something else. —R H.

POOR RICHARD'S ADZINE #1; 40¢ ($3 for 12 issues,; 28 pages; monthly; William McMichael, publisher; George Breo, editor; three-color front cover, order from: Windy City Publications / 4939 North Pulaski / Chicago, Ill. 60630; adzine.

There's nothing notable about an adzine coming out. These days they're almost as abundant as Marvel zines were in 1968. What is notable about PRA is that the rates are lower than most other publications of its ilk.

The format is straight 8½x11 inches, the ads represent many of fandom's familiar traders, the circulation of this maiden issue is 2,000 and the reproduction is fair.

Only one non-ad feature, a report on the fact that comic fandom exists which reads like it was culled from a Sunday newspaper supplement. —B N.

STAR*REACH #1; 75¢; 48 pages; 7x10; full color covers; Mike Friedrich, editor; order from Star*Reach Productions / 25325 Windfeldt Road / Hayward, Ca. 94541; underground-formal stripzine.

From the crude, typewritten little ads in the Buyer's Guide you'd hardly think STAR*REACH is a momentous publication, but it is. This underground format magazine answers fandom's Big Question: "Gee, what would the pros do if they could do what they really wanted, free of the Comics Code and the 12-year-old mind?"

Now we know what a few pros, at least, would do. Professional writer Mike Friedrich gathered some of his coworkers: artists Jim Starlin, Howie Chaykin, and Walt Simonson, and writer Steve Skeates and set them free to do their own thing. Now comes the Big Surprise: most of the unfettered product is little different from the same people's commercial work.

Take Starlin's two-part strip. Marvel's new master of muscular battles of the titans builds his story around ... a muscular battle of the titans. The characters aren't Marvel super-heroes, but they speak marvelese and spend most of their time fighting. The art, the layout are so fantastic ... just like the pro comics! The story is so weak ... just like the pro comics!

Howie Chaykin is noted for ephemerally-rendered swashbuckling fantasy. Sure enough that's just what he does on the cover feature, "Cody Starbuck." The story resembles DC's late 'Star Wolf' series. True, in aboveground comics the four sexy androids would've been scratched. Lines like "Fuck the dilator!" would have become "Curse the dilator!" Hardly major points. The rest is the same formula we've seen a hundred times before in both pro comics and fanzines.

Walt Simonson is the only big gun of the group who departs from the traditional. With an unfamiliar cartoon style he illustrates Ed Davis' wry prod at barbaric fantasy. The strip stands out as the most memorable piece in the book mainly because it's the least typical. Writer Steve Skeates winds up the magazine by both writing and illustrating four pages of mild satire. His cartooning is awful. Now there's something you admittedly wouldn't find in a pro comic.

It's an admirable move for Friedrich and his friends to launch a magazine with the potential of STAR*REACH. For many reasons no comic fan will want to be without it. Yet something is missing. The artists are drawing their hearts out, dazzling the eye with every page, but there's nothing underneath. We see the same tired themes and approaches. The major differences are seven "dirty" words, six pages of naked women, two references to drugs, and thirty gallons of blood.

What went wrong? Is all this famil ar simply because the men involved can't do anything but the same old stuff? Or is it because the same old stuff is what

these newly-liberated artists wanted to do all along? Perhaps they don't really want to break new ground, just to get around the Comics Code and the myriad hassles of big business. Analyzed on these terms, the reader would be unfair to expect too much. If the success of such a project is to be judged according to the producers' intention, perhaps STAR*REACH is a smashing success.

At any rate, it's clear that the Big Question hasn't really been answered. More than one disenchanted fan will read STAR*REACH, then say wistfully, "Gee what would other pros do if ..."

—R H.

SUPERGIRLS CALENDAR; $3.50 + 50¢ postage; 12 pages total; Jim Steranko, editor; order from: Supergraphics / Box 445 / Wyomissing, PA 19610; 1974 calendar.

HOO HAA, gang! Jim Steranko draws half-naked girls. Lots of boobs abound in this 11"x17" wall calendar (Jim'll mail it in a "plain brown tube" for you shy ones), but the poses strategically cover all of the "critical" areas. Just soft core, folks.

For $4.00 you get twelve different drawings of twelve different girls attired in superhero trimmings: e.g., boots and a cape. Each drawing is printed in two colors on a colored stock. Oh, yes, I almost forgot, there's a small three inch by three inch calendar month on each page, too. Whatever turns you on. —J.V.

SUPER PIN UPS SERIES #1; $2.50; 5 pages; 11"x17"; Thomas O'Reilly, artist; order from: Thomas O'Reilly / 522A West Craighead Rd. / Charlotte, N.C 28206, posters.

One of the primary functions of GEORGE is to give the would-be buyer some notion of whether the item of interest is priced fairly. Occasionally the price is cheaper than one would expect, usually it's reasonable, but too often it's too high. This little item has to be one of the most outrageously overpriced gems ever to come our way. Briefly SUPER PIN UPS consists of five superheroines (Wonder Woman, Supergirl, Black Canary, Mary Marvel, and Rose and Thorn) rendered competently but dully in black and white by artist O'Reilly. They are printed on cheap, thin, crumple-prone paper. They cost two to three times what they ought to.

For the princely sum of 50¢ each one might at the very least expect the gals to be scantily clad, but no such luck, men. Frankly, the drawings are so ordinary that I can't imagine any fan hanging them on his wall, what with all the nifty professional posters available at a reasonable price. Either O'Reilly was swindled by a fast-talking printer, or he's out to make a few fast bucks at fandom's expense. Whatever the case you'd be foolish to buy these things.

—A S

THE BUYER'S GUIDE #53 to 59; sample copy 50¢ ($3.00 for 24 issues); #59 is 68 pages total; Alan Light, editor; order from: DynaPubs / RR#1, Box 297 / East Moline, Ill. 61244; published twice a month; advertising fanzine

Ads, ads, ads. Buy, sell or trade! Hey, Kids! Step right up and get your funny books here. We got old ones and

new ones and ones that haven't even been published yet! We got fanzines! We got underground comix! We got Big Little Books! We got paperbacks, hardbounds, rare and brand new books! We got Convention notices. We got posters, original art. Step right up, kids, we got everything.

Joining the TBG circus in its 59th appearance, we find that the barker's claims are surprisingly true. Inside the newspaper-sized pages are hundreds of ads for just about every comic-related item imaginable, from a six-line classified ad (which costs a dollar to place) from someone wanting to buy some **FLASH GORDON** comics to a full double-page spread (cost: $76) taking advance orders on two upcoming Marvel magazines. And there's every size in between.

Circulation is 6,500, so there are always buyers for most products shown. It's a kick just to page through and see what goodies are available this fortnight.

To give the audience an intermission from the three-ring adfest, there are several columns which appear regularly in every other issue. #59 has an instalment of Don and Maggie Thompson's "Beautiful Balloons" which will keep you up to date on the miscellany of fandom, an instalment of "Crusader Comments" in which Marty Greim talks trivially and "Now What," being a general column by Murray Bishoff about comics. There's also a five page comic strip by Alan Hanley that's well done.

Ringmaster Light offers a few comments and sends you back to the advertisements, the main attraction of the show. Worth the $3.00 admission charge, if only to see the clowns. —J.V.

THE COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE Fourth Edition 1974; $6.50; 488 pages; 5½x8½; paperbound book; color cover; Robert M. Overstreet, editor, order from Robert Overstreet / 2905 Vista Dr. NW / Cleveland, Tennessee 37311 (or available from many dealers); Price list and reference work.

There's hardly a fan around who hasn't heard of Bob Overstreet's **COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE**. The book is known far and wide; dealers of every stripe use its listings, and more than one researcher has turned to the volume as an information source. Every year, the **PRICE GUIDE** gets bigger, fancier and more complex.

Therefore, it should come as no surprise that the new fourth edition is the biggest, fanciest, most complex **PRICE GUIDE** of them all. More than 400 pages of lists and cover reproductions attempt to catalogue and appraise every comic book ever printed in America. An introductory section deals with comics collecting, fandom and history. A final section contains thirty-six pages of advertising. Quite a production, thick, authoritative, professional. Just don't mistake the **PRICE GUIDE** for the Bible. But there are two important problems which shouldn't be overlooked.

First, in compiling any reference work on this scale, it's simply impossible to be right all the time. Listings of lesser-known groups, particularly need much more work. For instance, Charlton's unorthodox numbering system has led to the listing of nonexistent issues. Occasional identical but unrelated titles from different companies have been mistakenly combined. And the dearth of information about such oddball fringes as romance comics has surely generated many inaccuracies. My saying this shouldn't be taken as a slight against the labors of Robert Overstreet and his countless helpers and contributors. Over the years their constant efforts have made the **GUIDE** ever more comprehensive and useful a reference work.

But reference isn't what it's all about, is it? Is there a single fan alive who hasn't cursed the **PRICE GUIDE** for attaching an exorbitant sum to one comic or another? Such complaints are simple facts of life once a collectordom has been organized and "commercialized" as comics fandom has been. It's interesting to note that the Guide's original philosophy was to survey the prices charged by a number of dealers for a given item and to arrive at an "average market value" for the book. But those same dealers found themselves at last given a common ground upon which to build their price structures. Small time dealers who used to sell comics in bulk suddenly found they could sell Little Lottas for sixty cents rather than five. Deification of the **PRICE GUIDE** spread quickly, and dealers began adjusting their own prices to those in the **GUIDE**. When the next survey came, the prices to be averaged were the **GUIDE-adjusted** prices. A vicious circle had been formed. What started as a reflection of the market became the market itself.

Is there anything to be done about this? Probably not. Comics have been "discovered" by the world at large and prices won't go down. The average fan simply have to cuss and bear it. The best advice to take from the **GUIDE**'s introductions: shop around before buying.

Meanwhile, such a Guide deserves support for its value as the most highly-concentrated source of comics information for fans. And the Overstreet **GUIDE** deserves support because so far the only other such books have "borrowed" liberally from Overstreet's listings and simply invented new prices. —R.H.

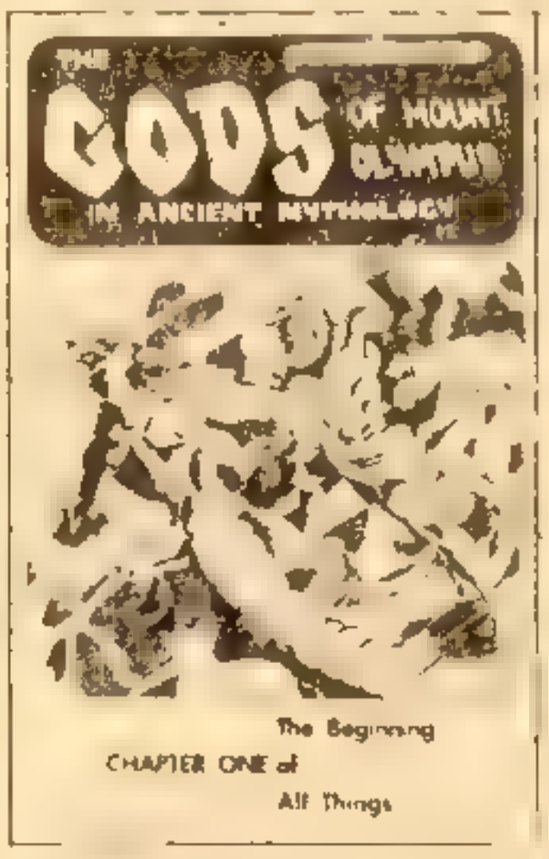
THE COMIC READER Nos. 104-106; 45¢ each ($2 for 5 issues, $4 for 10 issues); 20 pages each; 8½"x5½"; monthly; mailed first class; Jerry Sinkovec, editor; order from: Street Enterprises / PO Box 255 / Menomonee Falls, Wis. 53051; newszine.

TCR invariably comes up with the latest press releases from the major comic companies and makes them known to the members of fandom. Each issue is divided into a news section from National, Marvel, Red Circle, Charlton, Warren and underground comix, and a listing of the comics from each company which will appear on the stands within the next month. There is generally a catchall column devoted to miscellaneous news from the industry that doesn't relate to any particular company. I should mention that a brief description of each "upcoming comic" is given and cover illustrations abound.

Issue #106 also carries the results of the 1973 Comic Art Fan Awards with photos of the recipients. Cover art is by Don Maitz. A Comics Quiz by Alan Hanley tops off the issue on the inside back cover. Mailed flat without an envelope, TCR is still a must for those who want to know the latest buzzes from their favorite boutiques. —J.V.

THE FANDOM WRITER #2; 30¢; 15 pages total; ditto; mailed folded without envelope; corner stapled; Eric Malin, editor; order from Eric Malin / 2103 Ridgewood Rd. / Lake Oswego, Ore. 97034; article-fiction fanzine.

This is a hodge-podge of articles and short fiction, none of which are particularly memorable and a few of which are laughably bad. The articles are typically shallow, rambling discussions of current comic books; the stories are all not-so-tricky ending horror and science fiction shorties. The ditto printing ranges from OK to unreadable. Surprising for a fanzine of this sort, though, the editor has done his job; there are mercifully few spelling and grammatical mistakes. The cheap, plain-jane, no illustrations, no cover format could allow **FANDOM WRITER** to become a worthwhile starting point for neophyte fan writers if Malin would upgrade the general quality of the items printed and get his printing together. But it's not there yet. —A.S.



THE GODS OF MOUNT OLYMPUS IN ANCIENT MYTHOLOGY #1; $1.00 (3 for $2.75, 6 for $5.00); 16 pages total, 11"x17"; Johnny Achziger, editor. Order from: Quintessence Publications / PO Box 5246 / Spokane, Wash. 99205; stripzine.

For thousands of years the lore of ancient mythology has been sitting around like a ripe fruit waiting to be picked. Steve Reeves made some delightful but bad movies as Hercules and there were a few less-than-delightful (but bad) comics based on the same character. Now, at last, someone has harvested the rich mythfields of the old city-states, processed them into handy strip form and served them up on large tabloid pages in a pleasurable feast for both mind and eye.

This is the first chapter of the **GODS OF MOUNT OLYMPUS** legend, what you might call your origin story, adapted by Johnny Achziger and beautifully illustrated by Joe Staton (a professional artist whose credits of late include Charlton's E-Man and illustrations for several science-fiction digests). The story involves the beginnings of Earth, its early rulers and the famous struggle of Jupiter and his comrades to oust the ruling Titans.

The only error I find is Achziger's mixing of the Greek and Roman deities. He has Jupiter, Neptune, Juno, Mars, Pluto, Vulcan, Minerva, Mercury and Diana (Romans all) along side of Eros, Atlas and Apollo (Greeks, as are the Titans and Mount Olympus). Well, I guess one could argue that the Romans copied Greek theater, architecture and theology so the mythology is parallel. But don't let this minor point discourage you from buying and enjoying this publication. It comes with an 11"x17" poster and our heartiest recommendation. —B.N.

THE JOURNAL #9; 25¢ ($2 for 12 issues); 16 pages total this issue; 11"x17"; monthly; Paul Kowtiuk, editor; order from: Maple Leaf Publications / Box 1286 / Essex, Ont., Canada; ad fanzine.

This tabloid newspaper-format adzine from Canada is professionally produced, claims a circulation of 3900, has reasonable ad rates and projects a refreshingly informal non-big biz personality. The amount of non-ad material (letters columns, news) varies from issue to issue. In this one there's only a short item on Gene Roddenberry's current TV productions, but earlier numbers have had quite a few interesting readable features.

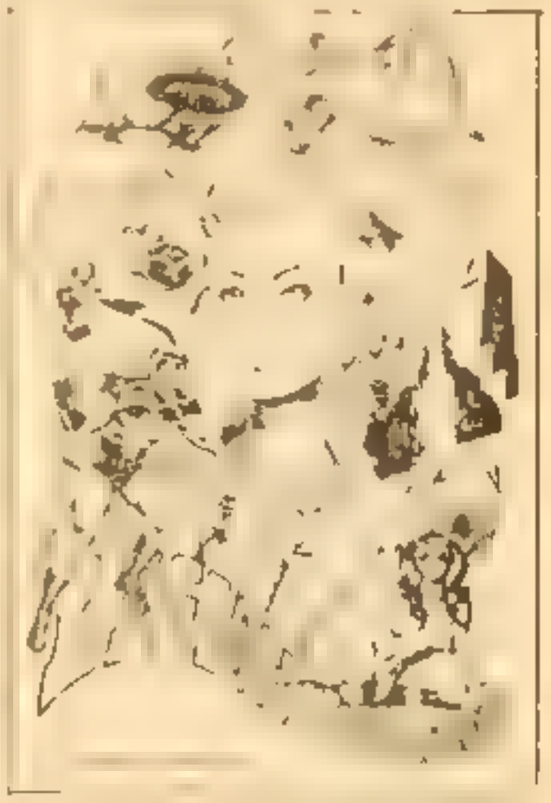
Over the past few issues there has been a noticeable decline in page count and ad linage. This suggests that **TJ** is having a rough time bucking the established competition in the adzine field. One would think that comics advertisers and by-mail shoppers would want to support TJ, it's pleasant and for a change, free from self-aggrandizing hype. But obviously only a trial ad or subscription will tell you whether it suits your needs. —A.S.

THE LEGION OUTPOST #6; 75¢ or 4 for $2.75; 30 pages; side-stapled; Harry C. Broertjes, editor; order from Harry C. Broertjes / 1865 Sherman Avenue / Evanston, Illinois 60201; general fanzine.

The very mention of a fanzine devoted to DC's Legion of Super-Heroes conjured up visions in this reviewer's mind of thousands of featherheaded subteenyboppers drawing crude pictures of Krypto and speaking Superbaby-talk. What a stunning surprise to find a well-mounted, thoughtful, and entertaining fanzine any fan editor could be proud of.

THE LEGION OUTPOST isn't strictly a LSH fanzine. A little more than half of this issue is given over to those DC wonderkids. The remainder is generalized DC fan talk concerning most all the company's hero titles. Major non-Legion features include a reprint of a British Batman short story with commentary by the author and a rundown of the English hardbounds in which such stories appear. Martin Pasko, DC scripter, tells of his experiences with DC's Junior Bullpen, blowing the bugle for the project as he goes.

The Legion features delve deeply into trivia and speculation about the supergroup. Long analyses cover such points as the geography of 30th-century earth, the personalities and biographies of Legion characters, and the development of storylines in the series. An illustrated column by editor Harry Broertjes discusses the departure of long-time Legion artist Dave Cockrum and his



replacement by newcomer Mike Grell. Spot art, ads, and a letter column round out the issue.

The **OUTPOST**'s serious treatment of the Legion of Super-Heroes may not thrill many fans, but DC fanciers will still find much of the zine worthwhile. It's well-laid-out, excellently-printed and a good value. —R.H.

THE NEW YORK REVIEW OF COMICS AND BOOKS #2; 50¢ ($5 for 12 issues); 16 pages total; 5½x8½; monthly; Steve Stern, editor; order from S-P Enterprises / 482 Lincoln Ave. / Orange, N.J. 07050; article fanzine.

From the rather pretentious title of this fanzine (dubbed "The Cultural Voice of Fandom") it's not hard to figure what the editor is trying for—a review/article combine with a studied, intellectual approach. Since all too many fanzines suffer from the Stan Lee rabbers, that silly, bubblebrained thinking/writing style that marks the so-called "fannish" fanzine, it would indeed by nice to see a more sobersided treatment. As of this issue, though, the **NEW YORK REVIEW** is having its problems.

The lead-off article, a three page discussion of E-Man by the editor, suffers from the author's failed attempts at intellectual posturing. In discussing the comic he makes references to Vonnegut, Heinlein and Dr. Johnson to give the proceedings an erudite air, but they are tossed in clumsily in a transparent attempt to be highbrow, and the point of the article is lost.

Next up is Guy Lillian, fandom's famous Windbag of the Lettercols, discussing Swamp Thing. He makes some interesting observations, but the piece is poorly organized according to the time-worn-out issue by issue rundown format. Following that is the "Foreign comics" department, an informative piece about a Mexican detective comic, with some sample art. This is easily the best thing in the issue.

Back into the mire of pseudo-intellectualism we go with two pages of nonsensical claptrap, "Some Reflections on Reading Action comics No. 1," followed by a discussion of Marvel's Son of Satan mag in which exorcism is mentioned in every third line (the author is trying to tell us that Marvel's being trendy, and he commits the same sin himself).

All of **REVIEW**'s people write well, but they are trying too hard to put on high-hat airs, what worthwhile observations they have to make lose out to their straining to assume that false pose. They have a good idea for this fanzine, but they are trying too hard, and I wonder whether they're equal to the task. At this point there's not much of substance to justify the 50¢ price tag.

—A.S.

THE ROCKET'S BLAST COMICOLLECTOR #109; $1.25 [or 4 for $4.50, third class mail; consult magazine for other options]; 100 pages; G.B. Love, editor; order from the S.F.C.A. / 9875 SW 212 Street / Miami, Florida 33157; adzine.

The good old **RBCC**, fandom's oldest adzine, rolls along with another package of ads and features.

About the ads, which are the **RBCC**'s bread and butter, what's to say? There are certainly plenty of them, covering everything from old radio shows to comics to Big Little Books. You can buy an ad yourself from 75¢ (classified) to $18 (full page) and get a circulation of 2000 copies. You'll have to consult an issue yourself for details, there are as many choices of ad size and cost as there are subscription options.

What about the feature material? First, there's a particularly fine Conan cover by an artist who is given credit nowhere in the entire issue, an unfortunate slip-up. Many interior features are regular columns: the fanzine review section, John Cooper's old radio column; James van Hise's "Science Fiction in Review"; Howard Siegel's random comments including pages from the National Cartoonist's Society sketchbook and a profile of Duffy Vohland, and a new greatly-improved reincarnation of the venerable Information Center column under the guidance of Don Rosa. Non-continuing features include a look at MLJ comics by Ray Miller, a decent reprint (serialized) of a nice Wood "Kenton of the Star Patrol" story from 1951; and a long article attempting to describe, explain, and defend the entire nostalgia field—a noble goal, but a bit much to accomplish in only six pages.

There you have it ... a quick overview of a real grab-bag of goodies. It's nice that after an issue of the **RBCC** is out of date as an adzine, it's still good as a fanzine. You might try an issue or two before deciding on a subscription. Your decision will depend on whether you're after ads, features, or both.

—R.H.

THE ULTAZINE #1; 75¢; 20 pages; Mike Iacampo, editor; order from: Mike Iacampo, 2522 Walnut Ave. / Altoona, PA 16601, general interest fanzine

I guess this could be called a fanzine "in the old school": not flashy, but displaying some effort on the part of the editors.

While not overly impressive, the art on "IT," the first comic strip in **ULTAZINE**, is competent enough. It's drawn by Frank Cirocco and was written by Mike Iacampo. Frank also provides several illustrations for "Venture: A Profile," which is an article on how he and a friend got together and put out a fanzine of their own. Gives some insight on the problems faced by would-be publishers.

Brent Anderson provides a couple of pages of dated news which may have been timely when **ULTAZINE** was first published, but are mostly old hat by now. The other text features are a short article on how to get good deals on comics when you go to a convention and a shorter one on the play "Warp." Both rate only fair.

Which is just about the rating of "Marvelous," a strip by editor Iacampo and illustrated by Brent Anderson. In the Daredevil school of scripting and art, this acrobat-turned-crime-fighter's adventures are not only neither too believeable nor exciting, but they are also continued.

The last strip is another one of those "Nasty Earthpersons Get Just What They Gave" stories. Larry Nibert does the art, displaying little style. Editor Mike does the scripting for this one too. Seems that he's been reading too many FFs, DDs, and Marvel reprint books.

The cover is also by Nibert. Backcover is a poorly printed reproduction of an

illustration by Neal Adams for the "Warp" play. I suppose this is an average example of a first issue of a fledgling fanzine, right down to the notice that it is going to be published every other month. Ah, the dreams of youth.

—J.V.

UNIVERSE #2; 25¢; 16 pages + 11x17 poster; Joel Fischer, editor; order from Universe / Dept. L / 17030 NE 18 Avenue / N. Miami Beach, Fla. 33162; General interest fanzine

Can the beleaguered mail-order fanzine buyer find true happiness with a twenty-five cent fanzine? He can! It's a tight little offset zine called **UNIVERSE**. **UNIVERSE** is a breath of fresh air in the stale room of "little" fanzines.

This second issue highlights short but meaty articles on George Wunder's **TERRY AND THE PIRATES** strip, the infamous Leonard "Mr. Spock" Nimoy, and the science-fiction film **WESTWORLD**. Sounds familiar, you say? That's **UNIVERSE**'s appeal, even familiar subjects are treated in an unconventional manner. The Wunder article describes how this obscure AP staff artist came to take charge of one of the world's most famous newspaper strips, and prints for the first time one of the sample strips which got Wunder the job. The Nimoy piece is an interview which deliberately avoids belaboring the STAR TREK issue and examines other facets of Nimoy's career. The **WESTWORLD** article, **UNIVERSE**'s longest feature, describes in fascinating detail the special effects mechanics which went into the film. The magazine's single fiction feature, "Aunt Janice" by Membrino and Johnson, is no masterpiece, but it's better than many and the Bob Mosher illustrations are good. There is even an Andy Warner poster in the centerfold.

How can you beat a combination like this? Good material, good layout, very good price. Compliments to the editor for one of fandom's best buys.

—R.H.

UNREAL #3; 35¢; 20 pages, 2 ditto, 5½x8½; Rod Snyder, editor; order from: Rod Snyder / 3600 Ripple Creek / Austin, Texas 78746; general interest zine.

Short stories comprise the bulk of this so-so fanzine. The six stories ranging in length from two-thirds of a page to four pages, are all similar. Whether dealing with science-fiction, horror, or barbarism, all are highly derivative, humdrum, and shallowmost with tired twist endings.

The rest of the magazine is filled by a couple convention reports, a short Ray Bradbury analysis, and numerous spot illustrations of highly variable quality. Pretty standard fare.

UNREAL would rate a bit higher if it weren't for a most annoying design quirk. The single-spaced typewritten text is hard to read to begin with, having been drastically reduced to fit the half-size pages. But to compound the agony, the editor chose to type every word in ALL CAPITAL LETTERS. If you haven't tried it, take my word: copy in all caps is nearly impossible to endure for any length of time.

If "just OK" quality is enough for you, **UNREAL** isn't a total loss. But with just a little more work the zine could be a whole lot better.

—R.H.

VENTURE #3; $1.00; 32 pages; Frank Cirocco, editor; order from Venture Magazine / 5567 Dwight Avenue / San Jose, California 95118; strip and art fanzine.

This third issue of Frank Cirocco's stripzine is a handsomely-produced collection of strips and full-page art. While Cirocco and Gary Winnick are responsible for most of the art, there are also three cartoon strips by Brent Anderson and one Jim Pinkoski illustration. Tossed in for good measure are a San Diego convention report and photos; and several Neal Adams sketches.

The art is nice to look at. Cirocco's and Winnick's styles are similar: both favor sketchy inks and large black areas in the ever-popular A. Williamson and his Friends manner. Both overindulge in the delights of, Zip-A-Tone. That shading medium is allowed to obscure detail here or is called upon to cover for weak drawing there. These are faults which can be overcome with experience and perseverance. Importantly, both artists—especially Cirocco—have strong imaginations and design senses which make even average drawing look stronger than the average fan product.

VENTURE's stories aren't as impressive. The requisite sf and sorcery strips are mundane; the humorous cartoons aren't, and the one unusual strip, starring a couple of insects, doesn't live up to the potential of its concept. However, as often happens, the art compensates for much of this.

VENTURE is a stripzine which improves with each issue. A product of talent, forethought and earnest work, the book is worth looking at.

—R.H.

WISE-UP #6; $2; 18 pages total; Larry Becker, editor; order from: MCFA / 3112 Holmes Ave. / Minneapolis, Minn. 55408, monthly article and ad magazine for the Minneapolis Comic and Fantasy Association

While this magazine is produced for local Minneapolis fans, there is still some material that seems aimed at a wider audience (i.e., it doesn't mention the word Minneapolis). These non-regional articles include a short history of "The Mighty Crusaders" from Mighty Comics Group, an appreciation of Radio Comics' superheroes, "By Crom, John Buscema's Not THAT Bad!"—being a quick look at his Marvel work and Conan in particular; and an appreciation of Warren's new **SPIRIT** magazine. The articles are not what one would call "in depth," but they are at least readable and non-pretentious. For those not knowledgeable on the topics, they might even be called informative.

Art is fair and, again, non-pretentious. Most of the drawings are done by someone named Smith (first name I think is Charlie) and are used primarily to illustrate the Radio and Mighty articles. Other art includes a Larson cover, some Bliss spot illustrations and an Iosa drawing of Conan. All pretty amateur stuff.

The Minneapolis doings are summed up in one page and there is a page and a half of fanzine reviews. Two pages of ads finish off the magazine. There is no price listed anywhere in the magazine

and it makes it hard to judge a book when you don't know what value the editor has placed on his material. If this sounds like a magazine you might enjoy, write to Larry and ask him the price.

—J.V.

1974 FANTASY CALENDAR; $1.00; 24 pages; order from Bob Lewis / PO Box 370 / Springfield, VA 22150; 1974 calendar

Dis is wot ja call yer basic 19 & 74 model fan calendar. It's got yer basic 12 months divied up into yer weekes and yer seven days an every day's got a dale, rest like the reglar ting. Evry month's got it's little dekritive border design and of course deres da rekquisite little calendars of the months before and after da one on da page. In udder wo'ds, da basics.

Wots left is da art, which is yer basic one drawing each by yer biggies. Dere's a Jeff Jones ting from an issue of **AMAZING**, a Berni Wrightson drawing from 19 and 70, a Steve Harper, a Steve Hickman and a Dennis Fujitake. Dere's also drawings by Jim Lankford, John Lawson, Bob Lewis (who is yer basic editor), Marc Cheshire (yer basic cat?), and Mike Nally. It's all printed on yer non-basic gray paper with blue covers. And dere's a 19 and 75 calendar trown in as a bonus.

One of da biggest tings wrong wit dis calendar is da fak that it's made like yer basic magazine and ya can't hang it on yer basic wall. Ya gotta flip tru it like a book ta find out dat today's really da day you tought it was. Not what ya call yer basic brightness on the part of da ed tor.

Oh well, dere's always 19 and 75.

—J.V.

NEWSPAPER STRIP REPRINTS

NOSTALGIA NEWS Nos. 21 and 22; 75¢ each ($3 for 5 issues, $5.50 for 10 issues, $10 for 25 issues); 32 pages total each; published approximately monthly; Larry Herndon, editor; order from: Nostalgia, Inc. / PO Box 34305 / Dallas, Texas 75234; newspaper strip reprints and movie magazine.

The bulk of each issue of **NOSTALGIA NEWS** is taken up with reprinting several old newspaper daily strips. Currently running are, "Inspector

Wade' by Lyman Anderson from 1935 "Al ey Oop" by V T. Hamlin from 1933 (wherein Oop meets Dinny), "Thimb e Theatre" by Be a Zabo y from 1941 "Barney Baxter" by Frank Miller from 1949, Dan Barry's "F ash Gordon" from 1956, "Blondie" by Chic Young from 1933, and "Secret Agent X-9" by Robert Storm and Mel Graff from 1940. Each strip is generally given two to three pages per issue and the reproduction is pretty good, a though occasionally prone to fading in sporatic instances. Overa it's quite good.

For the non-strip fans, or for those w th catholic tastes, there is a continuing column devoted to "The Rex's of Western Filmdom" by Buck Rainey. In issue #21, Rex Lease is featured, in #22 it's Rex Bell. The column goes into a great dea of depth about the respective Rex s' their personal and film careers, a listing of their movie credits and several photographs and stills of each.

Another column each month is devoted to movie villains with short biographies and film cred ts. Bruce Dern is in issue 22, Robert Phillips n #21. Ads, ed torials and letters comp ete each issue.

Production values are fine and the issue is generally pleasing to the eye. Your tastes will have to decide the rest.

—J V.

THE MENOMONEE FALLS GAZETTE #128; 75¢ ($8 for 12 issues, $16 for 26 issues, $29 for 52 issues); 40 pages, 11"x17"; weekly; Jerry Sinkovec, editor; order from: Street Enterprises / PO Box 255 / Menomonee Falls, Wis 53051; newspaper strip reprints.

The GAZETTE is undergoing some f nancial pains at the moment and in order to help ease the burden they've cut their page count back from 48 to 40. To accommodate their strips to these lesser number of pages they've put some on a rotating basis, cut a couple and added a new one.

Here's what s happening currently: the **KERRY DRAKE** Sunday strip was cut (the da ly remains), **FRIDAY FOSTER** is cance ed (Sunday and daily a synd cate move). the **DATELINE: DANGER** da ly is cance ed too. Added is **LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE** from 1936.

Put on a rotating, bi-weekly schedule are **RED RYDER** from 1952 alternating with 1935 s **RED BARRY, SCARTH A D. 2195** trades off with Caniff's 1940s **MALE CALL, TUG TRANSOM** p atoons with **BUCK ROGERS** from 1959 and **GUNNER** sh fts with **GARTH.**

Showing regularly are **RIP KIRBY, SECRET AGENT CORRIGAN, CAPTAIN EASY, DR. KILDARE, JEFF COBB, RICH O'SHAY, JULIET JONES, FLASH GORDON, THE PHANTOM, BUZ SAWYER, STEVE ROPER AND MIKE NOMAD, BRICK BRADFORD, DICK TRACY** and the aforement oned **LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE.** Those are al da i es.

All da es p us Sunday strips are **JOHNNY HAZARD, STEVE CANYON, AIR HAWK, ON STAGE** and **TARZAN.** From Sunday only is **PRINCE VALIANT.**

The foreign strips hold the line w th **MODESTY BLAISE, PAUL TEMPLE, THE SEEKERS, JEFF HAWKE** and **JAMES BOND** in add t on to the titles in rotation.

Remaining vintage material is **BATMAN** (1944), **SUPERMAN** (1944), **THE SPIRIT** (1942), **PETER SCRATCH** (1966), **BEN CASEY** (1964) and **KEVIN THE BOLD** (1955).

The reproduction is generally excellent the convenience of a paper l ke th s is invaluable, the idea is br lliant and the service of Street Enterprises is honest and attentive. If your interests include newspaper adventure str ps you'll find noth ng else in the world to equal the **GAZETTE.**

—B N.

THE MENOMONEE FALLS GUARDIAN #48; 35¢ (U.S. only; $4.50 for 12 issues, $9 for 26 issues, $17 for 52 issues); 16 pages total; 11"x17", mailed folded without envelope; weekly; Jerry Sinkovec and Mike Triefenbacher, editors; order from: Street Enterprises / P.O. Box 255 / Menomonee Falls, Wis. 53051; newspaper strip reprint paper.

Th s is the fanzine that brings you a week's worth of some of the best humor strips (and a few lightweight adventure strips) current y running in newspapers and a few older classics. The new strips are: **CONCHY, TUMBLEWEEDS, BROOMHILDA, POGO, GASOLINE ALLEY, B.C., BEETLE BAILEY, JOE PALOOKA, MICKEY FINN, GORDO** and **FEIFFER** (a ternating with **BOON DOCK**). Reprints are **POPEYE** (1934), **KRAZY KAT** (1935), **ALLEY OOP** (1949) and **CAPTAIN EASY** (1951). These str ps are al run six to a page, three columns wide. The **POGO** and **BROOMHILDA** Sunday strips are also included. The extra column space is filled with ads and more strips: **WINTHROP, EEK AND MEEK, THE BORN LOSER, FUNNY BUSINESS.**

Taste in humor varies, of course; not a of these strips w l elicit a chuckle from everyone. But **KRAZY KAT** and **POPEYE** are authentic comic classics, worth every collector's attent on, and I can't imag ne that there are more than a few sour sou s who wouldn't like strips as consistently funny as **CONCHY, BROOMHILDA** and **B.C.** The **GUARDIAN** a ways comes out right on schedule, it's printed on quality paper and the reproduction is f rst-class. A fine pub ication providing guaranteed gr n-inducing entertainment every week.

—A.S.

REPRINT FANZINES

E.C. CLASSIC REPRINT #6 (CRIME SUSPENSTORIES #25); $1.00 ($5 for six issues, $12 for 16 issues); 32 pages, standard comic book size; four-color covers and interior; Ron Barlow and Bruce Hershenson, editors; order from: East Coast Comix / Box 21364 / San Jose, Calif. 95151; reprint of EC comic.

This is a reprint of an EC cr me/shock comic from late 1954. The stories are: "Three For The Money," a four-s ded love triangle affair with Jack Kamen art; "Dog Food," a gris y prison story rendered by fineliner supreme Reed Crandall; "Key Cha n," based loosely on Bradbury s "The Fru t in the Bottom of the Bowl," with art by the br l ant and unconventional Bernie Krigste n, and George Evans wraps it up with "The Squealer." All stories by Al Fe dstein.

Kamen drew the cover and there s a thumbnail biography and top-of-his-head photo of George Evans inside. The original letter column is gone this issue but a couple of contemporary letters are included as well as three pages of house ads.

If you want to find out what was caus ng juveni e del nquency and sexual abberation 20 years ago w thout paying collector's prices, the **EC REPRINT** series is the best dea in town.

—B N.

EC CLASSIC REPRINT #7 (THE VAULT OF HORROR #26); $1.00; 32 pages in color; Ron Barlow, editor; order from: East Coast Comix / Box 21364 / San Jose, CA 95151; four-color cover; comic book reprint.

Hidden -Gasp- between the -Good Lord- covers by Johnny -Choke- Craig and Jack -Gulp- Davis are four of the EC horror stories that made them famous. This issue spotlights Johnny Craig in "Two Of A Kind," the tale of a vampire with a lot at stake. Heh, heh. Jack Davis does an eerie job on "Graft In Concrete," a story to knock you flat. Heh, heh! Sometimes ECer S d Check turns in a ha f-way (heh, heh!) decent job on "Half-Way Horrible," which asks the haunting question, "What would voodoo?" Ghastly Graham Inge s does "Hook, Line, and Stinker," all about the big one that didn't get away. Ads, letters column, and previews of upcoming issues fill up the rest of the book.

It's all in -Gag- co or and just the s ze of a real comic book. You can even subscribe to future reprints at the rate of six ssues for $5.00. A real bargain if you've got the stomach for it. Good lord!

—J.V.

E.C. CLASSIC REPRINT #8 (SHOCK SUSPENSTORIES #6); $1 ($5 for 6 issues, $12 for 16 issues); 36 pages, standard comic book size; color cover and interior; Ron Barlow and Bruce Hershenson, editors; order from: East Coast Comix / Box 21364 / San Jose, Ca. 95151; reprint of EC comic.

One thing the East Coast Comix EC repr nt series has done is to demonstrate that not al of EC's books were as all-fired great as the class c b ockbuster ECs that are spoken of in hushed, reverent tones by com c fans the world over. This one, certa nly, is not likely to send anyone into fits of transport, the prob em is with the stories. The **SHOCK SUSPENSE** t t e was particularly devoted to the patented EC shock/snap/tw st/sur-prise gimm ck ending tales. When the moon was in the right phase (or something) they managed to use this device effectively, but too often the stories were hopelessly contrived, the "story" be ng merely an excuse for a "shock" end ng wh ch veteran readers cou d invariably sn ff out in the early going. All the stories in this issue are of this sort; "Not So Tough," a grisly joke science fiction yarn with art by Orlando, being a spectacularly terrible example. The other stories are "Dead Right" (Kamen), "Under Cover" (Wood), and "Sugar 'n Spice 'n..." (Inge s).

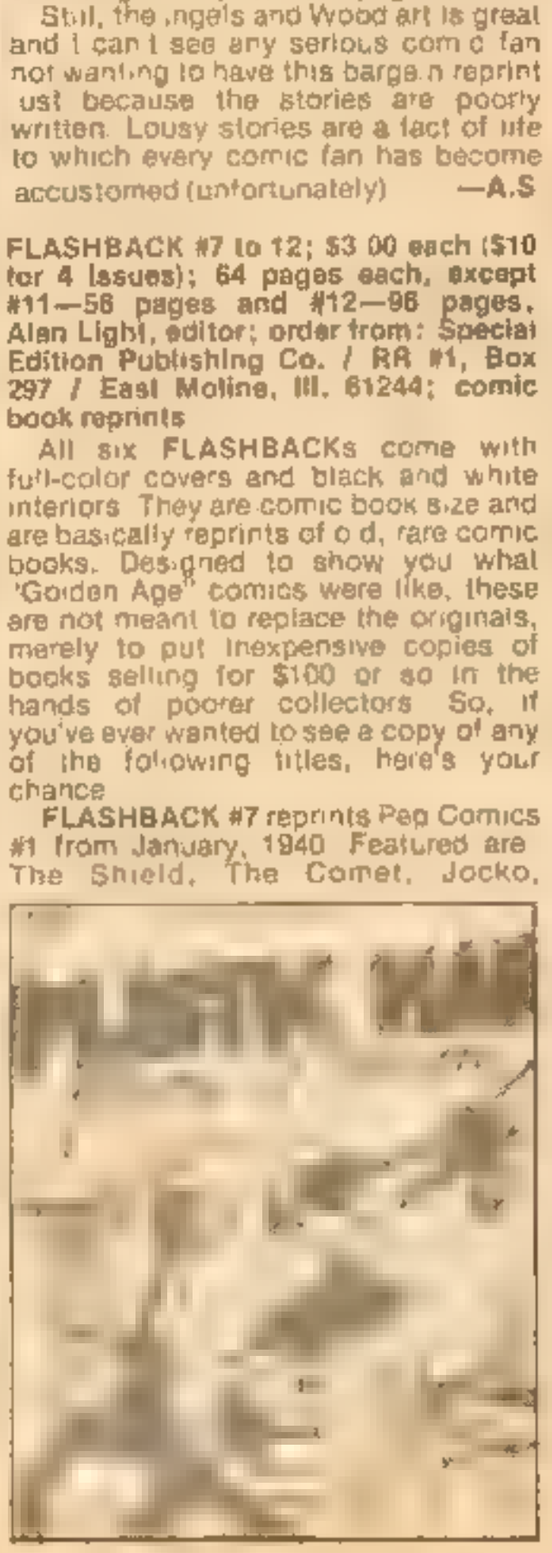
Still, the ngels and Wood art is great and I can t see any serious com c fan not wanting to have this barga n reprint just because the stories are poorly written. Lousy stories are a fact of life to which every comic fan has become accustomed (unfortunately).

—A.S

FLASHBACK #7 to 12; $3.00 each ($10 for 4 issues); 64 pages each, except #11—56 pages and #12—96 pages. Alan Light, editor; order from: Special Edition Publishing Co. / RR #1, Box 297 / East Moline, Ill. 61244; comic book reprints.

All six **FLASHBACKs** come with full-color covers and black and white interiors. They are comic book s ze and are basically reprints of o d, rare comic books. Des gned to show you what "Golden Age" comics were like, these are not meant to replace the originals, merely to put inexpensive copies of books selling for $100 or so in the hands of poorer collectors. So, if you've ever wanted to see a copy of any of the following titles, here's your chance.

FLASHBACK #7 reprints Pep Comics #1 from January, 1940. Featured are The Shield, The Comet, Jocko,



Sergeant Boyle, The Queen Of Diamonds, Fu Chang—International Detective, Bent ey Of Scotland Yard, The Press Guard an, The M dshipman and Kayo Ward. Reproduction is pretty good on this one as it seems to have been taken from a black and white book instead of the color comic, as was **FLASHBACK #8.**

FLASHBACK #8 gives you Young Allies #1 featuring a contrived story line that somehow manages to bring Captain Amer ca and The Human Torch into the final pages of the 64-page extravaganza which stars Bucky, Toro and the Sentinels of Liber y.

FLASHBACK #9 is The Dollman Quarterly #1. Within are five Dollman strips and one Justin Wright (Just 'n Right, get it?) story. Art is pretty good on these, but the reproduction returns to the murky Xerox-l ke quality of previous numbers.

FLASHBACK #10 reprints Captain Marvel Adventures #1 and it's 100 per cent Captain Marvel. Reproduction is clear but faded, and occasionally the misreg stered colors detract from the black and white reproduct on.

FLASHBACK #11 is a reprint of P astic Man #1 and sports some fine Jack Cole art. The reproduction seems to be better, too, as some of the blacks actually end up as black on the page.

FLASHBACK #12 reprints New York World's Fair Comics from 1939. In it, all the DC superheroes and characters cavort n adventures taking p ace at the Fa r. Superman, The Sandman, Zatara, Chuck Warren, Butch the Pup, Scoop Scanlon and many others are repre-sented. Interspersed between the adventures are facts and trivia about the World's Fair.

The **FLASHBACK** series must fill some void for col ectors somewhere. If they f t your needs, try one and see if you want more.

—J V.

YESTERDAY'S COMICS #3; 75¢ ($3.75 for five issues, $7 for ten issues, $15 for 25 issues); 32 pages total; Larry Herndon, editor; order from: Nostalgia, Inc. / 1830 Highland Dr. / Carrollton, Tx. 75006; comics reprint fanzine.

Yet another entry n the reprint derby, and a rather prom sing one at that. Three newspaper strips are bei run serially. **ALLEY OOP** (prime stu from 1939), **BUZ SAWYER** (1953) and **BIG BEN BOLT** (1950). The strips occupy three or four pages each. The magazine s feature of major interest to com c book fans will certainly be the one episode per issue reprinting of the famous Captain Marvel vs. Mr. Mind serial, which ran for 25 issues of Captain Marvel Adventures in the mid-40s. Reproduction is quite good, despite the fact that it's shot from the comic book; reproduct on on the str ps is OK, too.

This issue also inc udes the second part of a rather interesting article on radio drama in South Africa, where, in the absence of TV, it's still going strong.

Not a bad package, and of special interest to Captain Marvel fans for that ser al. Frequency of publicat on is not specified though and that may mean a goodly wa t between episodes.

—A.S

MONSTER TIMES BOOKSHELF

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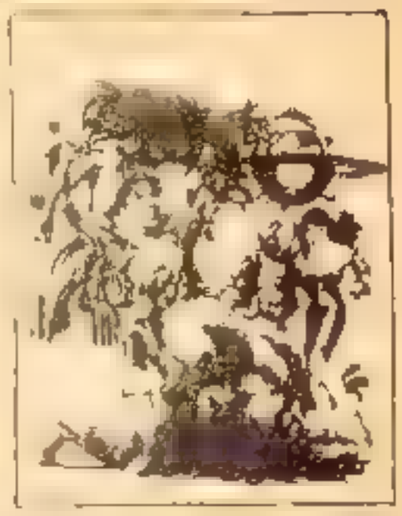

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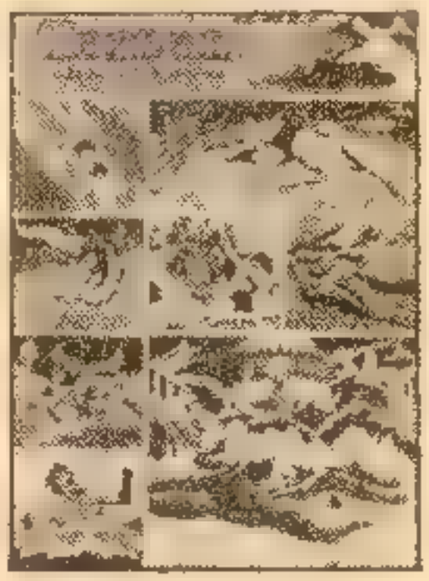
HOGARTH TARZAN



P 38 BURNE HOGARTH TARZAN An oversized 15" by 20" full color print of the Hogarth Tarzan page for March 16, 1941 $2.00 plus 50c

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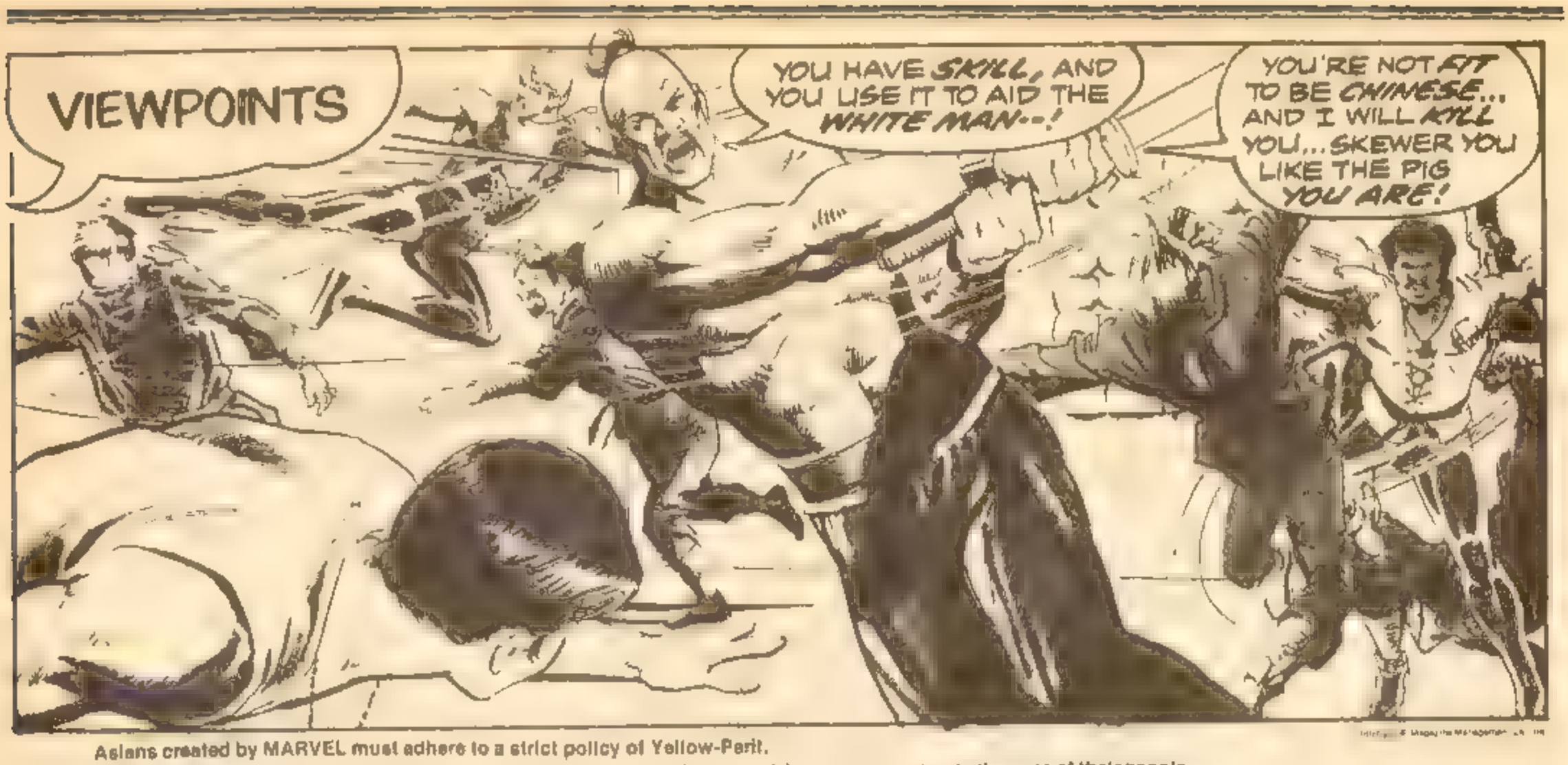
HOW MANY	POSTER NUMBER	PRICE (INC POSTAGE)	TOTAL PRICE
	P 35	$3.00	
	P 57	$2.00	
	P 58	$3 00	
	P 34	$2 00	
	P 33	$2 00	
	P 61	$2 50	
	P 56	$5 00	
	P 51	$2 00	

HOW MANY	POSTER NUMBER	PRICE (INC POSTAGE)	TOTAL PRICE
	P 60	$1 45	
	P 45	$2 50	
	P 48	$2.50	
	P 47	$2 50	
	P 50	$2 00	
	P 44	$2 50	
	P 36	$2 50	
		TOTAL	


VIEWPOINTS
YOU HAVE SKILL, AND YOU USE IT TO AID THE WHITE MAN--!
YOU'RE NOT FIT TO BE CHINESE... AND I WILL KILL YOU... SKEWER YOU LIKE THE PIG YOU ARE!

Asians created by MARVEL must adhere to a strict policy of Yellow-Peril.
They constantly play the aggressor and can only aid whites at the cost of becoming a traitor in the eyes of their people.

White Makes Right: Marvel's Kung Fu Color Line

Viewpoints
by William F. Wu

Since late 1973, Marvel's kung fu line has become the newest smash genre in comics. "The Hands of Shang-chi, Master of Kung Fu" led the way for "Iron Fist," followed shortly by the black-and-white "Deadly Hands of Kung Fu." The last introduced the strip, "Sons of the Tiger." "Shang-chi" is the only major comic book to feature a super-hero of Asian descent and the black-and-white contains the only full-blooded Asian on the side of good who has a steady part bigger than that of house-boy.

Unfortunately, there are glaring holes in what should otherwise be true progress in the area of racially balanced presentations. These strips adhere closely to both new and old ethnic stereotypes, and the only well-rounded major figure in the color comics is Iron Fist—a full-blooded Caucasian. The factors which offend many Asian-Americans run deeper than dialogue containing occasional racial slurs by villains—in fact, Marvel has made a point of raising Nayland Smith's consciousness and has made it clear that anyone who says "Chinaman" and "Yellow Peril" is not a good guy. What the Bullpen doesn't seem to understand is that a few lines of liberal jargon cannot counter the effect of racially offensive artwork and plots which align Asian culture primarily with villainy.

The Shang-chi/Fu Manchu strip is the worst example. Fu Manchu and his lackeys are most often colored a pale yellow—a "motif" according to a Bullpen comment in "Captain America and the Falcon" #172. These villains are given the ugliest treatment possible, with sharply slanted eyes, the pastel yellow coloring, sharp noses, and bulging fat or else protruding ribs. Professor Michio Kaku, writing in the February 1974 issue of **Bridge: The Asian-American Magazine**, noted that: "Marvel Comics ... has done some commendable work in introducing realism and blacks into comics ... Unfortunately, however, Marvel continues to print some of the most egregious Asian stereotypes."

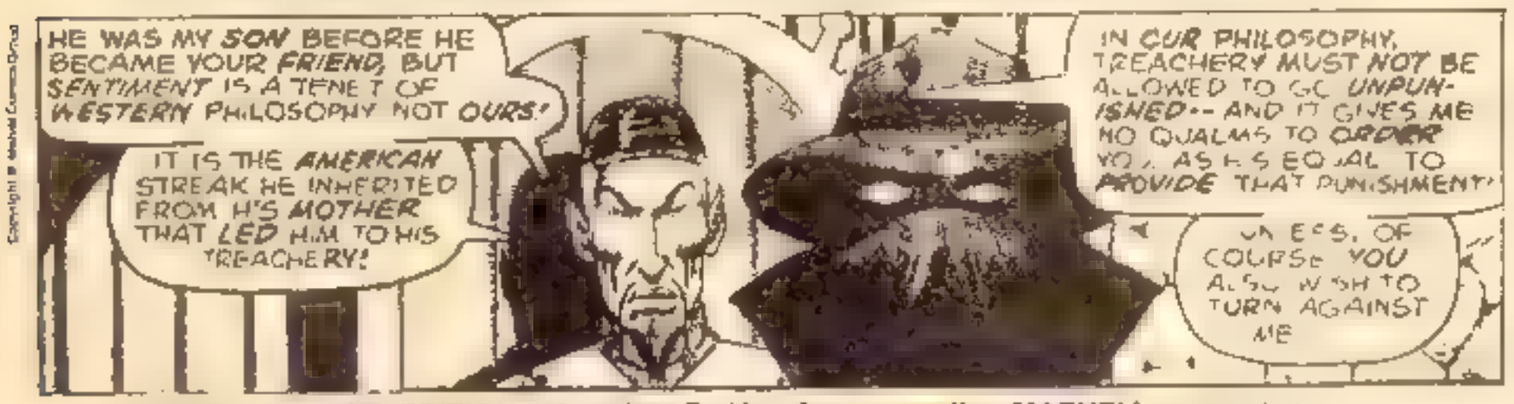
The problem is that the ugliness of these characters is produced by exaggerating racial traits: eyes slanted at an unnaturally high angle, skin-color shaded an unnaturally strong yellow. These villains could be nasty-looking and yet have realistic racial traits. As depicted so far, they have more than ugliness; these have racially-derived ugliness.

If temporary, these vulgar caricatures might be dismissed as novelties. As permanent villains, they command importance and attention equal to that of the hero. Where does Shang-chi stand as a representative of Americans of Asian ancestry?

Shang-chi is half Chinese and half Caucasian. So far, this fact has played no part in the plot. It has been used to explain why Shang-chi is colored a more pleasant orange rather than that sallow grapefruit hue ("Captain America and the Falcon" #172). Taking this logic a bit further, one understands how an American mother, seen on Page 16 of "Special Marvel Edition" #15, could be the rationalization for Shang-chi's not being ugly, not being extremely fat or extremely scrawny—and, finally, why he is not evil like his father. Sure enough, Fu Manchu himself confirms the fact that Marvel's concept of good and evil follows racist lines. From "Special Marvel Edition" #16: "... sentiment is a tenet of Western philosophy, not ours! It is the American streak he inherited from his mother that led him to his treachery!" Nowhere does any character or narrator dispute this; Marvel leaves the statement to stand as apparent truth. It is, of course, garbage, but how does a younger reader know?

Shang-chi mouths Asian-sounding platitudes, some genuine, and he wears a

MARVEL's stereotyping of Asians include sharply slanted eyes, sick pastel yellow coloring, sharp noses, and bulging fat or protruding ribs. (From CAPTAIN AMERICA AND THE FALCON #172.)


HE WAS MY SON BEFORE HE BECAME YOUR FRIEND, BUT SENTIMENT IS A TENET OF WESTERN PHILOSOPHY NOT OURS!
IT IS THE AMERICAN STREAK HE INHERITED FROM H'S MOTHER THAT LED H.M TO HIS TREACHERY!
IN OUR PHILOSOPHY, TREACHERY MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO GO UNPUNISHED-- AND IT GIVES ME NO QUALMS TO ORDER YOU, AS HIS EQUAL TO PROVIDE THAT PUNISHMENT!
UNLESS, OF COURSE YOU ALSO WISH TO TURN AGAINST ME

In SPECIAL MARVEL EDITION #16 we find Fu Manchu expounding MARVEL's somewhat distorted version of Eastern philosophy.

yin-yang symbol on his back. But this is nothing contrasted with the great emphasis placed on his rejection of his background. This rejection begins on the last two pages of the introductory story, as Shang-chi leaves the "empire of evil." "The Man-Menace Called Midnight!" was entirely concerned with the necessity of Shang-chi's fighting an old friend who had undergone training identical to his. On Page 6 of the third story, Shang-chi ponders his new situation, that of being enemy to both Fu Manchu and Nayland Smith. Fu Manchu, on Page 7, likewise considers his son's fate in the "western world outside, into which he has exiled himself." These steps lead up to Shang-chi's final rejection of evil, which is synonymous with his rejection of "old China." This occurs in the fourth story as Shang-chi becomes an ally of Smith, completing his split with Asian culture. Again, the subtle suggestion is that the more westernized one is, the better—the less Asian, the less evil.

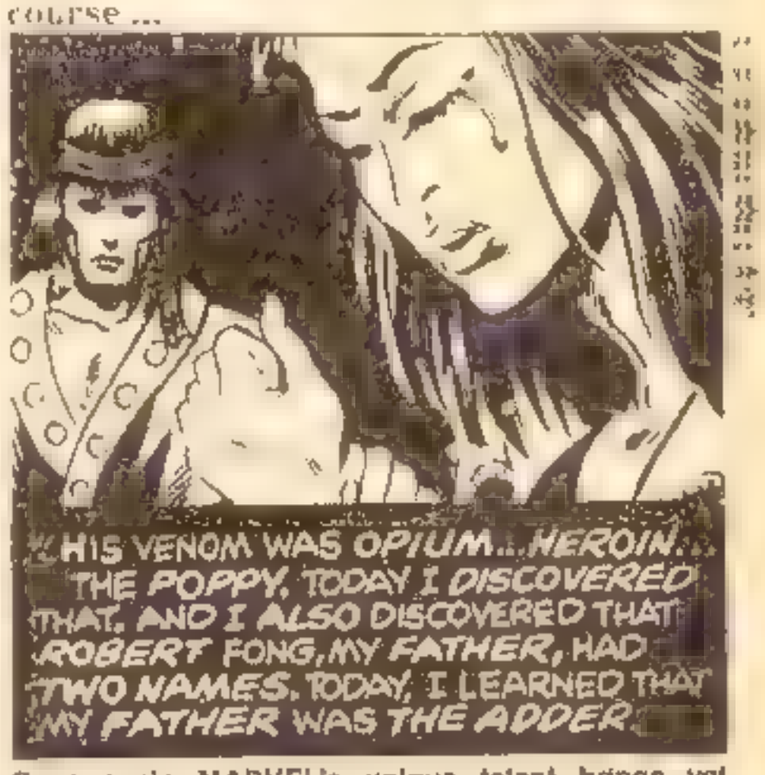
Fu Manchu lives among the decor and trappings of "old China," as seen in his dress, his lair, his lackeys, and his speech. Every aspect of chinese culture in these comics, including the training of Shang-chi, is a result of Fu Manchu's evil. Because of this, one has no basis from which to state that Fu Manchu is an individual Asian, and simply an individual villain. The total mix of evil and Asian culture which he controls suggests subtly that old China was evil .. and that to be a good guy, like Shang-chi, one must be part Caucasian and at war with all those lemon-colored faces.

Apparently, such a war is necessary for Asian heroes. While the likes of Shang-chi can freely maim henchmen of all races, the arch-enemy must be Asian. The conspiracy which is challenged by the Sons of the Tiger was revealed by an old Chinese, and the wing of the conspiracy smashed in the first story was led by another Chinese. By all indications, Asian heroes must always fight Asian arch-enemies. By contrast, Marvel's Caucasian protagonists have always had Asian villains to clobber: Dragon Lord, the Mandarin, Yellow Claw, Sunfire, the Silver Samurai. The deletion of Fu Manchu as a sociological expletive would open the strips to racially balanced villainy, which is an integral part of avoiding racist images.

The racial emphasis might be lessened if Fu Manchu's individuality were distinct from the Asians and Asian culture around him. He has a tremendous ego already, but he includes Asian culture in his sense of identity. Marvel would do well to make his megalomania more prominent than his Asian origins. Forgetting about Shang-chi's mother would also lessen the racial divisiveness of this strip. In the long run, however, only the elimination of Fu Manchu altogether would remove the offensiveness from the strip.

The cultural alignment in "Sons of the Tiger" is not as severe, the impact being toned down by the well-rounded personalities of Lin Sun, the Chinese-American hero, and his black and white partners. Lin Sun expresses his feelings loudly and realistically like Iron Fist rather than Shang-chi, and he has a serious commitment to revenge as a motivating force Unfortunately, the plot is again defined by racial lines.

In the untitled first story of "Sons," a multi racial trio of heroes goes to war against a mysterious "conspiracy against mankind" ("Deadly Hands of Kung Fu" #1). They do battle with a Chinese **ninja** group and a gang of black pushers. On the last page, the reader finds that the black pushers were being supplied by an opium den run by the **ninja** leader. There are no modern Asians in evidence here; only stereotypes. This opium den is another link in Marvel's chain of media retreads: first an inscrutable mystic in Shang-chi, then the pale yellow "mandarin" Fu Manchu, now followed by a Chinese opium den. Given a few more issues, perhaps one can expect a fanatic laundryman smuggling immigrants and a restaurant-owner forcing prisoners to fold his fortune cookies. The paranoiac concepts of the Yellow Peril that sprouted in America at the turn of the century and gave rise to Fu Manchu-style racial slurs have enjoyed a great revival in Marvel publications. Racism for fun and profit? ... Unintentionally, of course ...


HIS VENOM WAS OPIUM...HEROIN... THE POPPY, TODAY I DISCOVERED THAT, AND I ALSO DISCOVERED THAT ROBERT FONG, MY FATHER, HAD TWO NAMES. TODAY, I LEARNED THAT MY FATHER WAS THE ADDER

Once again MARVEL's unique talent brings yet another link in the stereotype chain into focus—the Chinese opium den.

The heyday of social relevance in comic books has passed, but the concern for racism was only a fad among those people whose lives were touched least by it. To the real-world counterparts of Marvel's fantasy Asians, racial and cultural libel is a substantial, important element in the kung fu line of comics. A medium oriented toward the young and the youthful is no place for a shoddy conscience. □

INSIDE BOOKS

AMERICANA IN FOUR COLORS: Twenty Years of Self-Regulation By the Comics Magazine Industry by John L. Goldwater Comics Magazine Association of America, Inc., $1.00

Americana In Four Colors is the coyly chauvinistic title of Comics Magazine Association of America president John L. Goldwater's short (if not sweet), self-congratulatory report on the benign effects that 20 years of self-regulation has had on the comics industry and its "impressionable readers." In the book, Goldwater offers the old, oft-employed and ever-unconvincing argument that censorship—in this case the Comics Code Authority—doesn't castrate creativity but encourages it by forcing comic artists and writers to constantly come up with new ways of saying nothing within the highly restrictive guidelines of the Code. "The self-regulation program has resulted in the elimination of much that is undesirable from the industry," writes Goldwater, "but it has also done much more. It has provided a stimulus for creative and responsible thinking and activity among publishers and editors, writers and artists. It brought with it a challenge to create magazines and stories that are interesting, exciting, colorful **within the framework of the Code.**" And that's Goldwater's emphasis, not mine.

Not only does Goldwater insist that the Code has spurred artistic creativity in comics, but also points with pride to the Code's incredible stringency and the strict surveillance of comic book creators undertaken by hawk-eyed Code Authority censors. This stringency and surveillance (every panel of a Code-member comic is carefully scrutinized before going into print) encourages the dissemination of a world view that is unrealistic and misleading to the point of madness. For example, the Code Authority insists that drugs not only be shown in a punitive light, with dealers being brought to justice and users to their senses, but further forbids any depiction that "stresses, by text or dialogue, their (drugs') temporarily attractive effects." I mean, it's one thing to highlight the negative aspects of drugs, but to present them as being totally unpleasant is senseless, because it obfuscates the real choices (between temporary pleasure and possible harm) that kids will one day have to make about drug use.

But then it's the all-out aim of the Code Authority to offer blanket protection of young comic readers against any knowledge of the sordid realities of life in these United States—and what better way is there to protect such an audience than by lying to it? That's a philosophy much-beloved by past and present rulers of this land, so why should the Comic Code Authority, of all institutions, be any exception? The Code insists, for example, that "Policemen, judges, government officials and respected institutions shall not be presented in such a way as to create disrespect for established authority." Kids growing up in Watergate America, an era in which the veils have been removed from traditional governmental corruption, could well develop a schizoid attitude, with the comics proclaiming that all is well while the rest of the media denies that contention. But then the very backwardness of the Code is championed by Goldwater in this book. The "Marriage and Sex" section of the Code, Goldwater boasts, "goes far beyond any similar standards in vogue today in other media in its prohibitions and requirements. Illicit sex relations may not be portrayed. Rape may not be shown or suggested. Sex perversion or any inference to it are strictly forbidden. The Code calls for emphasis on the sanctity of marriage and the home, and fosters respect for the moral code, and the protection of children. The close adherence to these standards in the "romance" category of Code-approved comics, as well as in all other categories, has been an outstanding example of industry responsibility, particularly since competing media has relaxed such standards markedly during this period in recent times." In other words, you might occasionally run into a somewhat progressive idea in a magazine or movie, but you ain't gonna find hide or hair of one in no **comic book**, by Gar!

For outside endorsement of the beneficial job Goldwater claims comics are doing in educating and morally strengthening their readers, he turns to such progressive sources as **The Reader's Digest** and the now-defunct (thank God) Catholic book burning agency, the National Office for Decent Literature. All in all, Goldwater's self-serving study is a sober, dated trip into an American Apple Pie Land that no longer exists—and probably never did except among the ranks of the privileged and insulated. To undertake such a journey at this point in time takes more crust than apples. **—Joe Kane**

Why is this kid laughing? Is it because he's reading a riotous Code-approved comic book, or because he's just sampled some of the other goodies available at his friendly neighborhood drug store—a whiff of amyl nitrate or a couple of potent "diet pills," perhaps? Does the Comics Code Authority realize that their wonderfully wholesome products are being peddled in such places? This panel from AMERICANA IN FOUR COLORS would indicate that they do indeed. Pretty scandalous stuff

VIEWPOINTS

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It's as Simple as Two times Two

a mathematical analysis of comics

Viewpoints
by C.C. Beck

Comics are picture-stories, whether they consist of a single panel or many. Some daily comics and political cartoons manage to tell a story with a single picture and just a few words of copy, while others use several pictures and considerable copy.

Comic book stories are many panels long and usually contain hundreds of words of copy. A book with no pictures in it obviously could not be sold today as a comic book, even though it might be a book containing a comic story. On the other hand, a book with no copy in it—just pictures—would really be nothing but a "picture book." Some writers for the comics try to turn their product into a story book, supplying so much copy that hardly any room is left for the pictures. Some artists try to do away with copy entirely, filling their pages with elaborate drawings. What should have been a comic book then becomes just another little picture book, like something you would give to a two-year-old child to keep him occupied.

There are an infinite number of stories to be told in comics, but each story consists of two elements, an idea and its actual putting down on paper:

STORY = IDEA + WRITING

Without going into a discussion of what the terms good and bad mean, let's just say that both good and bad ideas as well as good and bad writing exist:

IDEAS	WRITING
1. GOOD	1. GOOD
2. BAD	2. BAD

Two times two gives four, so that we have four possible kinds of stories:

1. BAD IDEA, BADLY WRITTEN
2. BAD IDEA, WELL WRITTEN
3. GOOD IDEA, BADLY WRITTEN
4. GOOD IDEA, WELL WRITTEN

Whatever kind of story a writer produces, it must be put into pictures before it can appear in a comic:

COMIC = STORY + PICTURES

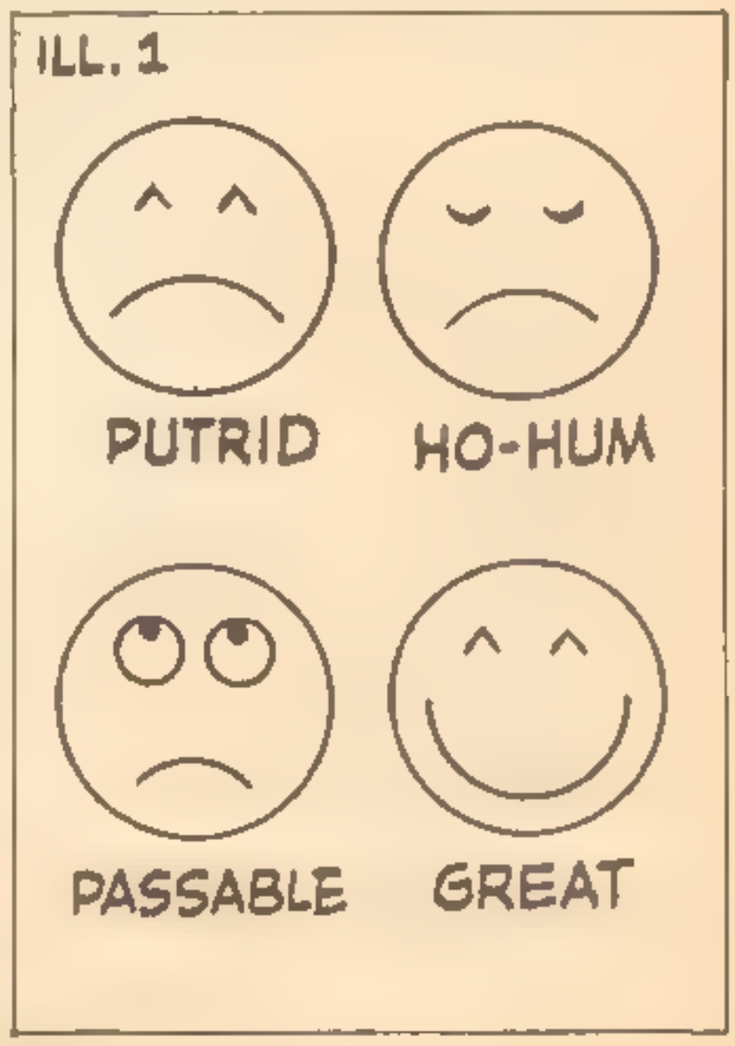
It is unimportant whether a comic is drawn poorly or beautifully. Some of the best comics have terrible drawing, while some of the worst comics have lovely pictures. What is important is how well the story is illustrated. Most people, including a lot of writers, editors and art directors, don't know the difference between drawing and illustrating. They are two quite different things, and if you can't tell them apart you should not be in the comic business or even reading comics. Many people don't read comics, you know. I doubt that many publishers, for instance, read comics—have you ever seen one doing so?

When an artist has something to draw, and draws that something so that other people can see it, he produces a good illustration. When he makes a drawing that does **not** enable other people to see what had, before the artist came along, existed only in someone's mind, his drawing may be marvelously well done but it will be **bad illustration.**

In comic book production the artist is told what he must draw by the editor and the writer. He is handed a typewritten script and told to draw whatever the script calls for. Let's call what he is to draw "copy" and what he draws "illo." The copy may be either good or bad, and his illo may also be either good or bad. Again, two times two gives four possible kinds of pictures:

1. BAD COPY, BAD ILLO
2. BAD COPY, GOOD ILLO
3. GOOD COPY, BAD ILLO
4. GOOD COPY, GOOD ILLO

We now have four possible kinds of stories and four possible kinds of pictures. Let's call number 1 in either list "putrid," number 2 "passable," number 3 "ho-hum," and number 4 "great."



Four times four equals sixteen, giving:

STORY PICTURES	STORY PICTURES	STORY PICTURES	STORY PICTURES
1· PUTRID - PUTRID	5· PASSABLE - PUTRID	9 · HO-HUM - PUTRID	13 · GREAT - PUTRID
2· PUTRID - PASSABLE	6· PASSABLE - PASSABLE	10 · HO-HUM - PASSABLE	14 · GREAT - PASSABLE
3· PUTRID - HO-HUM	7· PASSABLE - HO-HUM	11 - HO-HUM - HO-HUM	15· GREAT - HO-HUM
4· PUTRID - GREAT	8· PASSABLE - GREAT	12 · HO-HUM - GREAT	16· GREAT - GREAT

ILL. 2

SIXTEEN KINDS OF COMICS

You see that between putrid-putrid and great-great comics we now have a large number of other comics such as the putrid story with great pictures, and the great story with putrid pictures. No wonder there are so many mediocre comic books on the stands!

There is no great harm done when a publisher gets a bad idea and gives it to a bad writer and a bad illustrator to be worked up. The comic produced won't go far and will have few readers. More harm is done by putting bad ideas into the hands of good writers and good illustrators, for the resulting comic will attract many readers who will then be exposed to the publisher's putrid idea. This kind of comic, slickly produced and well distributed, can go on for years, unfortunately.

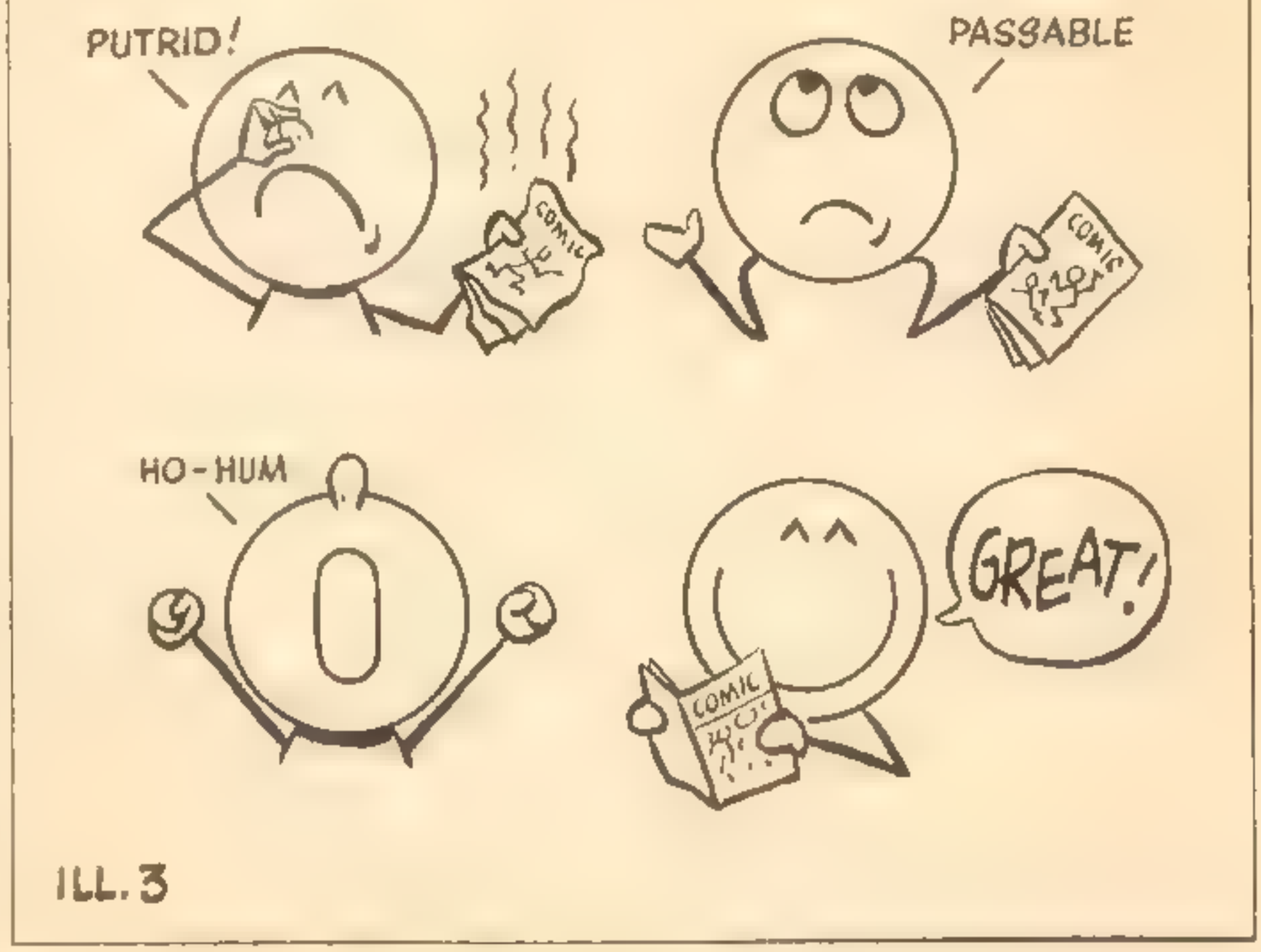
Good ideas put into comics badly written and badly illustrated don't go very far, as the readers can't get past the putrid writing and drawing to find the idea behind them. When a publisher buys or steals a good idea from another publisher, or from a writer or editor or artist, and puts it into the hands of an inept production department the comic will start off beautifully but will die out sooner or later. I could give a few examples of comics of this kind but won't, as comic readers know more about the subject than I do and don't need a list.

Whatever comics the publishers put on the stands, the kids who buy them will have just four possible ways of reacting to them, as all the comics between putrid-putrid and great-great will just make the readers indifferent or drowsy.

FINAL EFFECT ON READER

It's really a quite simple matter, you see. To make a great comic, just put together a great writer and a great illustrator, give them a great idea, and leave them alone.

It's too bad that so few comic publishers have ever tried to do this, isn't it? □



ILL. 3

Editor's note: Try rating the various comics on the stands according to the position you would give them in the chart above. It's fun. Which one rates a "putrid putrid," how many are "ho-hum-putrid," "putrid-great"? Do you know of any comic being published today that's worthy of a "great-great" rating? We don't!

CLASSIFIEDS

INSIDE COMICS CLASSIFIED All classified advertisements are accepted at the discretion of the publisher. Rates are 10¢ per word in medium type; 15¢ per word in bold type; and 20¢ per word in bold capitals. Thirty word minimum. Post Office Box numbers and telephone numbers count as two words each abbreviations and zip codes as one word each YOU MUST COUNT YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS AS PART OF THE WORD COUNT. Classified display is also available at $6.50 an inch minimum one inch. Send all classifieds to: Classified Department, INSIDE COMICS, 11 West 17th Street, New York, New York 10011

FANZINES

Master Dracula, printed on high quality paper, and bounded by full four color covers a sardonic horror spoof. Send 50¢ to: Master Publications, 6555 Camino Ventaroso, Goleta, CA 93017

Collector's Magazine. Covers all unique collectibles: militaria, nostalgia, memorabilia etc. Full-color Slick paper One year $5 (4 issues) The Classic Collector, 711 S Saint Asaph St , Alexandria, VA 22314.

Alternate Reality Science Fiction, Comix, Wargames, Articles, Stories, Reviews and Art Subscriptions $3/12, bi-weekly, fine mimeo and occasional offset, Rhodes Books, 694 Broadway, El Centro, CA 92243 Diplomacy openings available

Comic Media, England's top comics magazine is now available! Issue #10 contains a complete Eisner Spirit story Just 75¢ from Charlie Swift. 4718 N. 9th Street Philadelphia. PA 19141

Order the mighty no 2 for only $1.00 and really it's great! (The mighty no. 3 will be out soon) Order from: Floyd Comics, 910 Kenread Dr , Thomasville, NC 27360

Now and Then Times #2. Interviews: Al Hewetson, Casey Brennan, Syd Shores. Artwork Jeff Jones Shores Wayne Boring 52 pages $1 00. Order from: 103 Queen South, Kitchener, Ontario Canada. Thanx

SERVICES

Amateur artist searching fanzines to print original work and/or strips. If even vaguely interested, contact Ted Whitby, 557 Applewood Dr , Ft Washington, PA 19034

Original working drawings on tracing paper for finished airbrushed illustrations, have appeared in National Lampoon, Penthouse, Crawdaddy, etc. 3 drawings for $5. Frank Mell 312 Warren St , Bklyn, NY 11201

Cartoonist for hire! Will do free lance work for comic books, comic strips, magazines, etc If interested, write and request art samples. Terry Fisk Route #1, Cushing WI 54016

Bambi meets Godzilla. 16mm prints for sale Marlin Motion Pictures Ltd., 47 Lakeshore Rd E., Port Credit, Ontario, Canada (416) 278-2921

TRADING

Will trade Spider-Man #7 (fair) for Spider-Man #39 (good to exc). Send to Dennis Eggink, 1010 W 2nd St., Ripon, CA 95366

SELLING

Skywald's Hell Rider $3 00 each, Sandman #1 50¢ each, Savage Tales #3 $2.00. All are mint(never opened) Colorado Comics, 1516 Broadway, Denver CO 80202

Movie Posters, Monster, Western, Bond, Comedy, Hammer, Fantasy Thousands to choose from. All shapes and sizes. Low low prices. List—50¢ (refundable). Bob Word. 728 Tam O'Shanter, Orlando, FL 32803

Planet of the Apes collectors item Original 10 page study guide with 24 illustrations and cover program, $1 65 postage paid The Movie Gallery, 2491 Merrick Road, Bellmore NY 11710

For Sale—Strange Tales #15, 20, 27, 38, 42 Mint condition Best offer Martin Castle, 222 Greenkill Ave., Kingston, NY 12401.

Comics for sale Golden Age and Silver Ages Marvel and D C. We also buy Send 25¢ for our catalog to Mark Wildberger, 23737 Community St , Canoga Park, CA 91304

Monster Times #7 in Mint condition – Not even quarter-folded. Now what could be mint-ier than that?!? Offers exceeding $100 accepted only! Hurry—Only one left! Chance of a lifetime to complete your set! Mail Check or Money Order to Mr B , Box 411, Church St Sta., New York, NY 10008

Have 8 short 16mm sound films for sale Terrytoons, Lantz cartoons, TV cartoons, and Chimp comedy Two to eight dollars apiece. Mark Kausler, 2223½ Fargo St , Los Angeles CA 90039

For Sale. Comic Books. Phantom Stranger House of Mystery, Superman, Batman, Action, Unexpected, etc Send 15¢ for price list to Bill Forester 2705 40th St , Vernon B C , Canada

Shazam Comic Book Set #1-10 (ex, B). All individually signed by C C. Beck! 2 sets available bids start of $10 00. Art Ganatti, 1360 NE 204 Terr , No. Miami Beach, FL 33162

For sale 16mm features, shorts, stills, posters etc. Send your want/sale list with sase to: Continuum Films, 146 W 4th St., N Y C 10012. for catalogue of horror, sci-fi and genera

Comics! Comics! Cheap! Please send self addressed stamped envelope for free list The Collector's Market, P O Box 1314, Rockville MD 20850

For sale Soundtracks Star Trek, Wild Wild West, movies Will trade for comics, old books, etc. Sase for information. A.J Smith, Rd. 2, Codding Rd., Ulster, PA 18850

Many copies! E C. horror library $16 50, Little Nemo (English) $21 00. Popeye $5.90, Terry and Pirates $10.60, Tarzan $8 50, Flash Gordon (Volume 1 or 2) $11 00 Sobel, 11 N. Bette Commack NY 11725.

Amazing T M T, #9 & #10. Best offers over $75 00 Also am selling Nightmares #13 & #14 Best offers over $50.00 Write, Brian Gray, 1638 E 58th St , Tulsa, OK 74105.

2000 shares in Lunartoons. an animated film studio, are now available at one dollar apiece. For more information write Bruce Yurgi 334 Ridgewood, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137

Ron J. Frantz, WSA #334, 6406 NW 42. Bethany, OK 73008 Comics of the 60's for sale Fair prices Over 1,000 in stock and still growing. Send for free list

Attention Old Time Radio Collectors Quality Scotch #150 tape in 1800' lengths still available. Only $25 00 per carton of 12 Post paid. Write M E S Enterprises, Box 610. Branford CT 06405

Original art: Alley OOp daily strips Only $8 50. Other strips available Lloyd Mozingo. 306 New Haven Drive, Lititz. PA 17543

I have ten rare old original Marmaduke cartoons for sale now at only $25 apiece. Send check or M O to: Craig Anderson, 5930 University Ave., #12, San Diego, CA 92115

For sale 2 pulps Fantasy Book #1 (1947) and Fantastic Science Fiction #1 (1952), both Fair condition. $2 00 plus 25¢ postage each Bob Garrison, 15003 East 41st, Independence MO 64055.

For sale or trade. Complete set of Classics Illustrated. All original print runs starting in the forties. Bob Startup, 6809 Emlen St , Apt 101, Philadelphia, PA 19111

For sale Thousands of American comics, Golden Age and on for sale. At prices well under American market values Send $1 00 for sample copy of Fantasy Advertiser International (sold in 17 countries). Nostalgia Inc., P O Box 34305 Dallas TX 75234

For Sale Nick Carter, Tiplop, work and western weeklies, dime novels, old magazines, books, postcards, girly magazines Stamp for list 680 Brentwood. Winston-Salem, NC 27104

Detailed drawings of Planet Apes suitable for framing A must for serious collectors Set 75¢ plus 25¢ postage Apes, 3858 N. 98th St , Milwaukee, WI 53222 Same day [illegible] first class

For Sale Mint DC and Marvel comics — Kamandi 1-4, Supernatural Thrillers 1-7, Demon, Swamp Thing Send stamped self addressed envelope for list Wayne Silva. 828 Kaumana Drive. Hilo HA 96720

Pulps, comics, paperbacks and specialty publications for sale. Fantasy World Enterprises, 17574 Towne Crest Drive, Gaithersburg, MD 20760 (301) 948-8235

First editions of Return of Tarzan, Beasts of Tarzan Son of Tarzan Also wish to sell War Comix contact Dick Whitten, Rid-on Road, Berwick, ME 03901

75 000 Comic books, Big Little Books," Sunday funnies, etc., 1910-1956 Also premiums, movie, radio stuff Catalog 35¢ Large "Golden Age" comic book collections bought, send list, price. Ken Mitchell, 760 Ash, Winnipeg, Manitoba. x6

WANTED TO BUY

Wanted copies of Vampirella #3 and '72 yearbook Also, anything to do with the Barbarella comic strip or movie. Mint condition

Wanted Abyss, I Be Damned #2 #3 Graphic Story Mag, 1-14, Spa Fon #1-4, Vampirella #1,5 8-10 21 Yearbook '72, Blazing Combat #1. Creepy #12,31,33,34, 37-45, Eerie #11, 12, 17, 18, 23, 27, 30-34, 36-40. Cliff Jones, 17680 Robbins Road, Grand Haven, MI 49417

Wanted Original Frazetta art. Will pay good prices. Send your list to P Shelley, 9 Locke Ave , Larchmont NY 10538

Wanted Obscure works of R. Crumb. Bob Dylan writings, interviews) Paul Krassner writings (Realist #1-19, 22, 28, 33-4, 37-8 67), anything by Alan Watts (S.F. Oracle Earth). James Dougas, 9 Sorowoc Lane Bayshore, NY 11706

Frank Atkins, 6700 Jefferson Davis Hwy Richmond VA 23234. Want following by Bradbury tomorrow midnight park carnival switch on the night the autumn people [illegible] sing the body electric (mint)

Wanted—Early "Little Lulu" comic books Send dates and prices. Judy Lurie, 424 Norwood, Buffalo, NY 14222

Wanted Marvel Comics (golden age to present) Famous Monsters, Creepy, Eerie and T M T Give the price and condition Send list to: Fred Meyer 3946 Thorazan St Louis, MO 63116

Wanted Spiderman 79, 83, 87. For sale, mint condition Marvel, Worlds Unknown, DC, Shadow, Shazam (no #1), first collectors' edition best offer Dan Taylor, Burke Circle McDonough GA 30293.

Interested in buying (cheap) old Marvels (1960-1971). Send list (Fantastic Four, Silver Surfer, Hulk, Spider-Man). Write Seaborn Adamson, 2265 Ashley Woods Drive, Tucker, GA 30084

Wanted, All kinds of comics and hardback books on comics and comics characters. Send catalogues or lists to Tim Thompson, 4505 Bowman, Grapevine, TX 76051

Wanted, E C. comics, will buy or trade Marvels for them Send list price etc. to AMN Michael J. Spence, 91st CSGP PSC Box 2981 Minot AFB ND 58701

Wanted: Mr Miracle 3, 4, 8 Forever People 1, 3, 4. Also ECs and Warrens Send lists to Bill Cunningham, 1108 W. San Antonio, San Marcos. TX 78666

Wanted. Wash Tubbs dailies 1924-1935 1938 1943-1945 Easy's at Buz Sawyer dailies 1943-1970! In runs by years only please! Alex Toth 2121 Broadview Terrace Hollywood CA 90068

Wanted Walt Disney's Vacation Parade #1 and any other Carl Barks work, original or reprint. Rolling Stones items also. Hi everybody! Steven Denenberg, 1110 Chugach Way Anchorage, AK 99503

Wanted Little Orphan Annie daily & Sunday strips Greg Rice, 1571 E Bates Pkwy Englewood CO 8011

Want to buy Spidermans #2 pay $14 00 #3 pay 10.00 also want old sports magazines Rick Moore, RR 1 Box 4 Camby, IN 46113

Wanted The Demon, New Gods. Forever People, Mister Miracle and Kamandi. Will pay up to 75¢ For the numbers write Mike Hart, 21 Pittman Circle. Greenville, SC 24611

Wanted DC Comics No older than 1970 especially new series Send list, price and condition to, Mark B Smith, 3048 SW 14 St., Ft Lauderdale FL 33312

Wanted! Good condition Justice Society and Justice League comics Cheap. Write Drake Letcher 811 Main St , El Segundo. CA 90245

Wanted Shadow pulps. Write with price. M. VanBuren Hunt IV, P O Box 61, LaPlata, MD 20646

Wanted Out of print copies of Witzend Send list & prices to Kirk Robbins, 430 Boving Rd , Lancaster, OH 43130

Wanted to buy, any posters, clips, or stills from Fantasia, Yellow Submarine, Fleischer Popeye cartoons, and Peanuts TV/Films. Write Steve Borer, 2135 Ingehart, St. Paul, MN 55104 Thanks

Wanted: Marvel Red Circle and DC Comics Mail lists to Jason Harootunian, RD 1, Cazenovia, NY 13035, lists mailed after July 1; Jason Harootunian, 815 Comstock Ave., Syracuse, NY 13210

Wanted. Back issues of SF Mags F&SF, Galaxy, etc Steven Sullivan, 1428 Midland Ave., Bronxville, NY 10708. Send lists & prices

Wanted Anything, repeat, anything to do with Spiderman! Old comic books. paperback books, toys, games, models, posters Send list, prices, condition to David Harrison, 82 Bloomfield St., Spfld., MA 01108

Pogo material wanted. Reasonable price paid. Send list to Vintage Comics Project, 17th floor, 235 E 45th St N Y NY 10017 Att. Chris

Am interested in acquiring pre #76 back issues of the Menomonee Falls Gazette If selling, include SASE with list and condition. Philip Taylor, 60 Pearl Ave., Oil City, PA 16301

Wanted Old SF paperbacks, Send titles and prices to: Randy Laymon, 100 N. Mulberry St Chillicothe OH 45601

Wanted Newspaper strips or articles on comics and superheros. Send prices and descriptions. Douglas Holben, 681 3rd St., NW, Grand Rapids MI 49504

Wanted old Ace double science fiction novels, D-series and before, must be in good condition Jim Lat ano 450 Forrest Ave., Apt #A-213, Norristown, PA 19401

Wanted Printed material such as comics, postcards, sheet music, books, etc. with negro subjects. Especially want copies of "All Negro Comics" Richard Horlick, Box 46533 Los Angeles, CA 90046

Wanted Tower comics and Brak the Barbarian Books Also Underground comic—Tales of the Plague earch Corben D B Master 2033 Elsmere Ave., Dayton OH 45406

Wanted [illegible] of Dark Shadows, MASH Brewster McCloud, Images, Pale 'n' Tillie Write Patty Gosnell, 541 W 5th St., Seymour IN 47274

Wanted. Any Beetle Memorabilia Send SASE, description of article, condition and price. Ernie Martin, 601 W Main St , Mt Olive NC 28365

Wanted back issues E V O [illegible] Warthog magazine, Shelton [illegible] Esquire March 1972, Simon & Schuster Pogo books Send lists, prices. R W Main 1369 Lakeshore Rd. E., Mississauga, Ontario, Canada.

Wanted Stephen Becker's The Comic Art in America and Captain Marvel Jr in fine or better Arthur Aw., P O Box #11032 Honolulu, HA 96814

Wanted: Fantastic Four #1, Coverless. Mint or with cover in poor condition and insides mint Please write Robert James, 613 Vista D'est Drive Coram, NY 11727

Wanted fine copies of Pre-1968 Marvels DCs, any issues Creepy, Eerie, Vampi[illegible] also National Lampoon 2 through 10, any older comics Mike Coxe. 501 Winston Ave , Bennettsville SC 29512

Wanted Comics Boys Ranch, Contact, Rangers 38. Pulps Adventure-type pulps and Spicy-Speed titles with E Hoffman Price stories Karl Wagner, 27 Valley Park. Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Wanted. The Menomonee Falls Gazette 6, 8 15, 21 29 33, 37, 39 40, 41, 44, 45 49 Contact H Keeling DuGarm, 2031 6th St. NW Minot ND 58701

Wanted Any mid-50s issues of The Mighty Atom—cheap. Rich Schnoor, 300 Brown Blvd , Wyandanch, NY 11798

Have any ERB mat to sell or trade? Contact me K A. Kerkewicz 212 Van Buren St , Newark NJ 07105. Give list and/or prices

I'm interested in pre 1954 EC mags in vg-m condition. Send selling list to: W. Whitson, 227-84-8188, Box 4128, D Co., C&E Schools, MCB, 29 Palms, CA 92278.

Want to buy (cheaply): Marvel Super-Hero comic books from Jan. 1969 to Jan. 1972. Please send price lists to: Dennis Rasch, 622 E. Washington, McAlester, OK 74501.

Wanted: Daily & Sunday strips. Pogo 6/56-4/57, Rick O'Shay 7/71-5/73, Li'l Abner 9/63-6/64. Robert Marshall, 1720 Larch Court, Peekskill, NY 10566.

Wanted: Early '60s Marvels. For Trade Marvels & DCs; plus others. Send want & trade lists. Gary R. Spiewak, 61 MacBelle Dr., Clark, NJ 07066.

Wanted: Hero pulp magazines—The Spider, Dusty Ayres, The Octopus, The Shadow, etc. Don Hutchison, 147 Leacrest Road, Toronto, Ontario (M4G 1E7 Canada.

I'll pay $4 or more for the following: Issue #18 of The Realist, Wonder Warthog mag #1, Shadow pulps vg-mint. Write Mark Kemes, 4632 Spruce, Philadelphia, PA 19139.

Wanted: Marvel comics & Magazines. Will pay up to $1.00 each. Also want Comix premiums, fan club kits & their magazines. David Baca, 1807 Morris NE, Albuquerque, NM 87112.

Wanted: Intelligent discussions of fifties science fiction films or something. Must have unwarranted bad taste and thorough knowledge of motion picture history. D.N. Spindle, 21 Gay SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503.

Wanted: Material or correspondence on Lenny Bruce, Melanie, Harlan Ellison, Orson Welles, or The Prisoner TV show. Fellow fans please write. Rich Monfort, 1330 N. Orange Dr., Los Angeles, CA 90028.

Wanted: Most Superman Family Comics and premiere issues by DC. Am a private collector and will pay top prices. Please write. Paul Goldstein, 1875 Shaw Ave., Pgh., PA 15217.

Wanted: Old Astroboy comics in Japanese, and German published Astroboy; also any other comics by Osamu Tezuka. Please send list. Wendell Washer, 18014 Sherman Way #170, Reseda, CA 91335.

Wanted: Foreign comic books, especially Fantemas and 5 por Infinito. Also early Legion of Super Heroes. Write Jorge Cook, Box 422, Circleville, OH 43113.

Wanted: At reasonable price, daily Green Beret strips by Kubert. Runs only. Quote price. James Schumeister, Dept. of Psychology, Douglass College, New Brunswick, NJ 08903.

Wanted: Any Disney one sheets, advertising posters and original art. I will pay highest prices. Also other cartoon studio one sheets. Ron Becker, 68 Montague Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201.

Wanted: Mystery in Space, Showcase and Strange Adventures featuring Adam Strange. Also, comics featuring Deadman. Send lists and prices to: Hoy Murphy, Kayford, WV 25116.

Wanted: Will pay reasonable prices for old Quality Police Comics and old Plastic Man comics especially by Artist Jack Cole. Write to: M. Stadterman, 302 Cherry St., Brackenridge, PA 15014.

Wanted: Old Marvel and Timely comics as well as ECs. Send price list complete with conditions to: Karl Nelson, 49 Makinak Bay, Winnipeg, Canada, R2Y 1B8.

I want Ditko's Capt. Atom prior to Strange Suspense stories. Also I'd like some Ditko original sketches or art. Send prices to: Peter Allegra, 67 Melrose St., Bristol, CT 06010.

Help! I need issues #31, 33, 34, 42 & 59 of the Menomonee Falls Gazette. Angi Sack, 919 Madeline Ln., Lawrence, KS 66044.

Wanted: '60-'66 TV comix, movie comix — TV Guides. Don Feltman, 67-41 Kissena Blvd., Flushing, NY 11367.

Wanted: Tarzan T-shirts, posters, novels, hard covers, Tarzan comics, before DC and DC. Anything to deal with Tarzan. Send list and prices to John Salisbury, 48085 Norton, Northville, MI 48167.

Wanted: paperback version of Return to Planet of Apes (west coast). Dale Blumenthal, Room 419, 16 Gramercy Park So., N.Y.C. 10003.

Wanted: Any Spider-Man comics, old issues. Please let me know. Jim Marshall, 8331 Farrand Rd., Otisville, MI 48463.

Wanted: Donald Duck comic books, Volcano Valley, The Old Castle's Secret, Lost in the Andes. Bill Lest, 455 Eddy St., #E-802, San Francisco, CA 94109.

Wanted: Famous Monsters #s 24, 23, 21, 1962-63 Yearbook. Fine Condition. Send prices to: Richard Schoenholtz, 35 E. 208th St., Bronx, NY 10467.

Wanted: Doc Savage, Shadow, Burroughs, & Avenger pulps. ECs, Warren Magazines, Big Little Books, original art by Wrightson, Frazetta, Krinkel, Williamson. Kip Wendler, 2200 W. 26th N., Wichita, KS 67204.

Wanted: Old Spider-Man & Fan. Four. Send list & prices to: Doug Walden, 5803 Bremo, Richmond, VA 23226.

Wanted: Mad magazines from 1 to date in very good-mint condition only. Please send complete list with prices to Brian McTavish, 11215 E. 75 Terrace, Raytown, MO 64138.

Wanted: Marvel, DC, Golden Age comics, pulps, Doc Savage, Shadow, Robert E. Howard works, also Sword & Sorcery, SF, Fantasy. Steve Saffel, 1440 Eastern Avenue, Morgantown, WV 26505.

Wanted: Kirby Third World mags, Savage Tales, Conan. List number, condition, price. J. Lowe, 640 Ashmont, St. Louis, MO 63132.

Wanted: Back number Marvel and National comics. Must be in good condition with reasonable prices. Send list and prices to: Michael Kimmel, 928 Burke Avenue, Bronx, NY 10469.

Corben is God. Anybody out there with original Corben art or rare Corben items, name your price, or just write, comic folk. P. Daley, 1547 N. Dearborn Pkwy, #3 N.E., Chicago, IL 60610.

Buying Detective pulps, movie posters, original artwork, prints, etc. Items considered in any condition. Send listings to Kent V. Dragoo, 420 W. Charles St., Muncie, IN 47305.

Wanted: First volumes, one and up, of Marvel's Foom magazine. Also will buy newspaper clippings and photos on Lenny Bruce. Description and prices: Tomas Ybarra, 2706 East 22nd, Austin, TX 78722.

Wanted: Lost in Space bubblegum cards, models, stills, scripts, etc. Anything at all to do with this show. I'll pay top dollar. L. Forzano, 112 Carstairs Road, Valley Stream, NY 11581.

Wanted: Mad comics, magazines with covers, from good to fine condition. Send price list, with SASE. Also anything on Marx Bros. Tom Fink, 5636 Dupont Ave., No. Mpls., MN 55430.

Wanted: All Dennis the Mennis and Star Trek comic books. Send your lists to: Howard Elliott, Rt. 1, Box 45, Ada, OH 45810.

Wanted: Old fountain pens, all kinds, all makes. Sheaffer's, Parker's, Waterman's, etc. Jeff Solomon, 840 Pelham Road, New Rochelle, NY 10805.

Wanted: Back issues of Spider-Man and Conan. Sam Park, 406 Oak St., Malden, MO 63863.

Wanted: Fantastic Four 100-106, 108-110, II in good condition, I will pay 75¢ apiece. Contact: Steven Cohen, 17 W. Mosholn Pkwy., Bronx, NY 10467.

Wanted: Anything on the serial Commander Cody, Sky Marshal of the universe. Ernest Hong, 1247 Center St./Honolulu, HA 96818.

Wanted: Any near-mint or better 3-D comics and magazines. Any art by E.W. Kemble and A.B. Frost. Printed material with Negro subjects. Horlick, Box 34633, Los Angeles, CA 90034.

Wanted: 3-D comics with paper glasses. Please send condition and price. Floyd White, Box 67, Cove City, NC 28523.

Wanted: Comics, paperbacks with POGO; pre-1950 Barks WDCS, Four Colors 9, 29, 48, 62, 79. MAD (comic issues). Write first. Alan Hutchinson, 4051 80th Way North, St. Petersburg, FL 33709.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

In search of a Bonaparte of your own? So are we. Sample First Empire Funnies. This ad to be continued when we publish.

Popeye Fans, correspond with me! If you have any Popeye memorabilia for sale, give me your prices. Address: Donnie Pitchford, 202 Alta, Longview, TX 75601.

Graphic artist for hire—See full page ad in April or May TBG. Willi H. Bleimeister, 19 N. Clinton St., Pok, NY 12601.

I've been burned by Gothic Castle, so I'm only warning CoF readers to watch out, as others have been burned also. Craig Seavers, 1990 Mento Drive, Fremont, CA 94538.

I am interested in obtaining comics in quantity lots, reasonably priced, either odds and ends, junk, or just plain good comics. Put me on your mailing list. J. Horton, Rt. 1, Box 728, Ft. Smith, AR 72901.

Would like to start solid, intelligent, opinion-oriented fanzine. Help, articles, artwork, and judgements sought. Interested? Write to: David Kirby, 131 Tazewell Rd., Newport News, VA 23607.

Even a man who is pure of heart and says his prayers at night may become a wolf when the wolfbane blooms and the moon is shining bright. Right, Larry?

We wholesale underground comix, dope books and other subversive products to retailers. Wholesalers and dealers send for sample bumper-sticker. Homestead Distributors, P.O. Box 5331, Tacoma, WA 98405.

Please! Send me your selling list. Christopher Frost, 404 Trites Ave., Norwood, PA.

Expose on Civil Air Patrol free for the asking. Send for Gutter Capers, P.O. Box 10145, Pompano Beach, FL.

I am interested in trading comics from 1968—1972 for comics and science fiction magazines and books from before 1964. Contact: Robert Nelson, 2232 So. Emerson, Denver, CO 80210.

Low Prices! Comics: D.C., Marvel, many others; Underground comix; Fanzines; Prozines; Posters; Artzines: Send self-addressed stamped envelope for list. Geol Werner, 20 Temple Terrace, Trenton, NJ 08638.

Attention! Larry Nelson Jr. in Columbia, SC. Whatever happened to that photo you were going to send? Still waiting for it! You'll be receiving something very valuable in return! Hurry! Hurry! Hurry! Signed: R.B., N.Y.C.

I will trade and buy. I am primarily interested in D.C.'s and Marvels since 1960, as well as Weird titles. Andrew Velonis, 50 Beech Rd., Glen Rock, NJ 07452.

Bemi—Please don't leave Swamp Thing. Neal—How'za bout some more Conans? Watch for Dream Sequence. Thanx, Ron Weinstein.

Hopefully, the staff of Inside Comix will show some more journalistic responsibility now than in previous issues, and still manage to uncover the truth. Remember, Joe, it's how its written.

If any collectors in Orlando area would like to discuss, buy, trade and sell comics, call Mike Tennyson, 838-3086.

Have any comics dated before 1960 that you want to sell, contact Jeff Kepley, 9626 Gage St., Elk Grove, CA 95624.

Send comic price lists to: CIP, 906 W. 14 St., Lorain, OH 44052. Most wanted are Marvels, Warrens, Monster, and DCs. Hurry!

If you are ever in Cleveland, stop by Genesis Vegetarian Restaurant. I'll be there to give you a good meal and lotsa discussion about anything.

Gorilla for Hire! Will entertain at partys, weddings, grand openings, etc. Just go to Scuffy's in Wayne and ask for Scott.

Would like to make contact with serious comic collectors in N.J. area, but will correspond with all. Interested in contacting politically oriented comic freaks. Also interested in buying collections. Interested? Contact Charles E. Cascone, 137 Washington St., Newark, NJ 07102.

Everybody! Write to the Warren magazines and tell 'em WE want a Sci-Fi Magazine!!! And do the same to Marvel! Martin Ventura, Redondo Beach, CA.

I want to know anyone in the Cleveland area that's interested in comics, pulps, paperbacks, etc. Maybe we can get together? Pete Panizzutti, 4988 East 71 Street, Cleveland, OH. 341-4613.

Comix World ... You may not like it, but you can't stop it! Brian J. Buniak is coming! Capeesh?!

To anyone interested in giving me real old comics for free—Write to me—M.G. Schick, 8616 Timber Hill Lane, Potomac, MD 20854. Remember—For Free.

Hal Foster Prince Valiant French reprints (1965), 32 color Sundays in each book. Books #2-12 cover 1939-1944. More information SSAE. James Saliturl, 7105 6th Ave., Montreal, Que., Canada H2A 3E3.

This may sound silly ... But I love my wife more than comic books—She didn't make me say this!

Contest—Send $1.00 plus SASE to enter. Then you receive Monster Crossword Puzzle. Fill out, send back. Grand prise $15, everyone wins a prize. G.L.O.B., Box 1102, Henderson, KY 42420.

Comics in the Schools! I am in my 2nd year of teaching a course in Comics. I could use assistance in sharing ideas/materials. Contact: Steve Balzarini, SEE, 90-B, Ivy Way, Matawan, NJ 07747.

$1-$1000.00 for your AMATEUR artwork. Details 354, 1275 Waverley, Vancouver, B.C., V5W 2C4.

Hey, kids! Do you have stacks of old comics cluttering up your room? Well now you can get rid of those dust collectors. Send them to Jim LaRock, Rt. 1, Stoutsville, OH 43154.

Graduate student needs help in compiling bibliography of all articles dealing with Comics Code controversy. J. Milleway, 2507 S. Boston Pl., Tulsa, OK 74114.

Wanted: Anything Sherlock Holmes (film materials, comics, etc.), Kennedys, Basil Rathbone. Sale: Sherlock Holmes (thousands items), Jack the Ripper. Wants/sales lists airmailed free. 48 Shalmarsh, Bebington, Wirral L632JZ, England.

I need contributors for a soon-to-be fanzine. Also contribute. Write to Steve Wootton, 1317 Chambers Drive, Colo. Spgs., CO 80904.

Question: Who has the most 1933-1955 comic books for sale? Answer: Why, Ken Mitchell of 760 Ash Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, of course. Catalog 50¢ (refundable). I buy more large, private collections than anyone, anywhere. Try me. Satisfaction always guaranteed. (Ask your editor). For further information phone (204) 488-3285.

Doomed Universe magazine, devoted to horror, sci-fi and comics, is now available for only $1.00 plus 25¢ postage. Send to: Doomed Universe, P.O. Box 361, Parkchester Sta., Bronx, NY 10462.

Interested in comic or related catalogs. Interested in correspondence and bargaining with anyone about comics, fanzines, radio shows, etc. Write to: Scott Grammel, 39 Helena St., Leominster, MA 01453.

New Jersey comic fans unite! I'm looking to form a comic discussion-trading group. Call or write: Dan Veltre, 10 Bergen Ave., North Arlington, NJ 07032.

Want to start fanzine & correspond with writers & artists (new) who are serious and willing to spend time. Write: Brad Black, 6125 Taylor Rd., Gahanna, OH 43230.

I am interested in building a comic collection—Need help. Contact me. Thank you. Wm. Hutchinson, 5938 Agusta St., Philadelphia, PA 19149.

Inside Comics is a fantastic publication. Continued success, and please keep publishing only the truth. We need you in this complex comic world to keep fans informed. Art Fleischmann.

A mile beneath the table's edge, my tongue falls into water. He who held the knife conceals himself in shadow, forever. Larry A. Miller, 9051 Fontana Ave., Fontana, CA 92335.

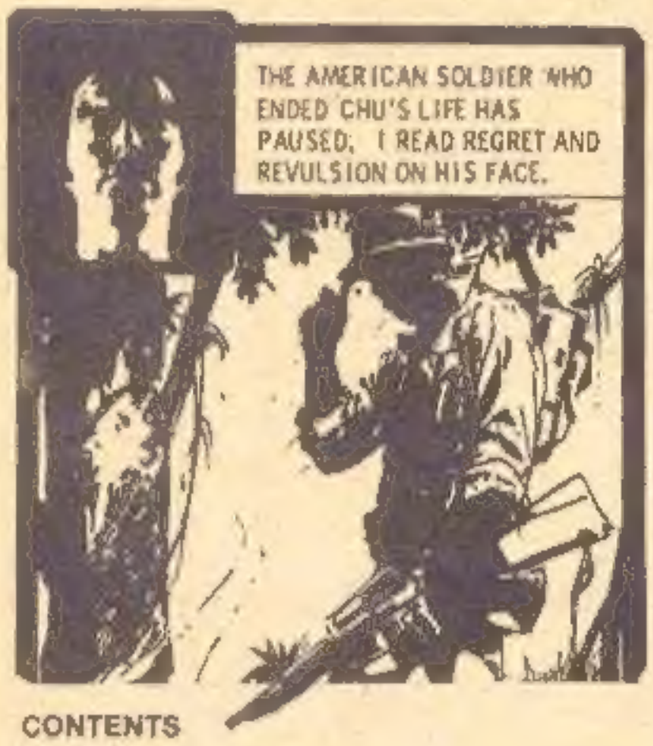
BUYING & SELLING

Comics! I buy, sell, trade. Sell by mail. Send want list with SASE. Jeff Rudolph, 153 Main St., Bridgeport, CT 06602. The Biggest Little Dealer in the State.

I talk, trade, buy and sell comic books. For more information write to: Steven Goldenberg, 1221 Julia Lane, North Bellmore, NY 11710.

Collectors Items. Comics—DC, Marvel, Dell, Classics Illustrated. We buy and sell. For catalog send 50¢ to: S. Nasello, 42-65 Kissena Blvd., B-11, Flushing, NY 11355.

PHASE MAGAZINE



CONTENTS

Sword of Dragonus
story: Chuck Robinson * art: Frank Brunner

Impact
story and art: Ernie Colon

Coming of the Piranhas
story: Denny O'Neil * art: Steve Skeates

Duel
story: Gerry Conway * art: Gray Morrow

Soul Food
story: Phil Seuling * art: Chris Notarile

Comes the Grey Dawn
story: Marv Wolfman * art: Rich Buckler

Home
story and art: Jeff Jones

Veteran
story: Kathy Barr * art: Ken Barr

Barn
story and art: Bill Maher

Sally's Song
story and art: Mike Kaluta

Getting the Point
story and art: Kenneth Smith

Comic Book Freak
story and art: Tom Sutton

Yesterday's Rain
story and art: Steve Fritz

Dragon Slayer
story: Len Wein * art: Tony De Zuniga

A View from Without
story and art: Neal Adams

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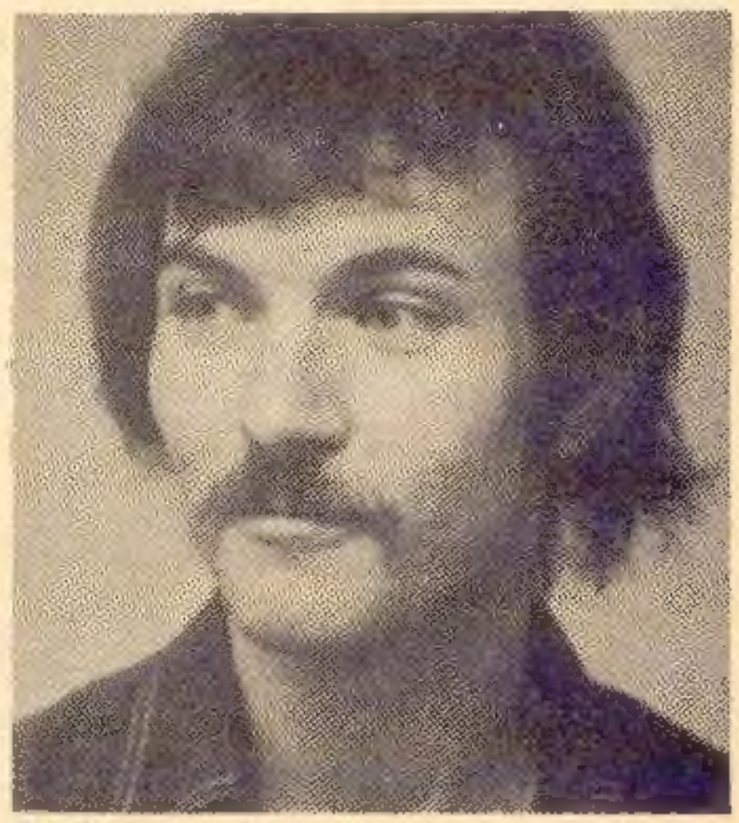
THE LAST WORD

With the age of comic conventions and price guides has come the commercialism that has left behind forever the days when you could collect comics just for the fun of it. Gone forever are the days when you could amass a whole Marvel collection in one summer. A collection that might have cost you a nickle a piece. That was the going price for used comics in the dozens of ma & pa candy stores in my hometown anyway. But that was a long time ago. Marvel had just churned out the first dozen **FANTASTIC FOUR** when I first began to experience a wondrous addiction to comics. My joy and amazement were only limited by the nagging fact that I didn't own copies of F.F. #1, 2, 5, 6, and 9. I wasn't worried though, because I knew I'd eventually find them waiting for me in one of those huge stacks of used comics. I also knew they'd only run me 5¢ each. So, during the summer of '63, I spent my time pouring through the used comics in every candy store my tired feet would carry me to. There was Bob's Candy Store, Mary's Confectionery, Brown's, Sherman's Magazines, and a host of others I can't recall the names of.

By the end of the summer I had managed to find near mint copies of F.F. #1, 5, 6, and 9, but #2 still eluded me. I had even picked up doubles and triples on most **FANTASTIC FOUR** issues, but that damn #2 wasn't to be found anywhere. I knew that my comic collecting friend down the block had a copy, but Stanley wasn't about to part with it. I had offered him my ten best doubles for it, I had even offered to throw in an extra two bucks, but no dice. He wouldn't even tell me the store he found it in. All he would say is, "I found it at my secret store." So, I was without F.F. #2 for what seemed an eternity. Visions of Stanley's "Secret Store" hounded me for weeks. One day, I think it was a Saturday afternoon, after hitting all the stores on my run, I wandered into a High's Ice Cream Store. I was just about to blow my last few cents on a bottle of Coke when my eyes zeroed in on an inconspicuous stack of comics behind the counter. I knew High's carried all the new stuff, but these were **used.** I asked to see them and, sure enough, they were the usual used 5¢ comics. Something I didn't know they did. I greedily started flipping through the stack. Lots of D.C. crap at first, but suddenly a couple of Marvels. Had them. More D.C. stuff ... **then** F.F. #2 ... **then another** F.F. #2. I knew then I had found Stanley's "Secret Store." Well, I sailed home and gently placed the better F.F. #2 in between numbers 1 and 3.

Complete at last.

As I said, that was a long time ago when comics were collected for the wonderful fun of it. They weren't worth an awful lot, except to the few scattered fans who appreciated them. Even then only a dollar or two a piece at best. The years rolled on and I kept my Marvel collection up to date as any hard-core addict would do. My collection had reached mammoth proportions when I attended my first convention. A friendly gathering of mutual comic fans who came to the Big Apple to see some pros. Dealing was being handled in a tiny



Ron Barlow

room tucked away somewhere. I didn't care about that. I had come to see the pros. The people who created the comics. I was a comicbook junkie and I was there to see my supplier. My dream was answered and I went home. Ten autographs richer.

The following year brought yet another convention as well as a larger dealer's room. The following year saw another convention with an even bigger dealer's room. By the next year the dealer's room was two rooms and seemed to be the ONLY reason most people came. It was then that I decided to kick the habit. Comics were no longer friendly. The mercenary dealers had attacked the heart of comics like a plague. I never hated the dealers, I just felt they were an incurable disease we'd have to live with.

So, dumping my collection for peanuts, I washed my hands of the temptation to become just another dealer. The comic collector had spawned the comic dealer and I felt I was no longer either. The ma & pa candy stores were dying out and the visions of Stanley's secret store no longer haunted me. —**Ron Barlow**

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